

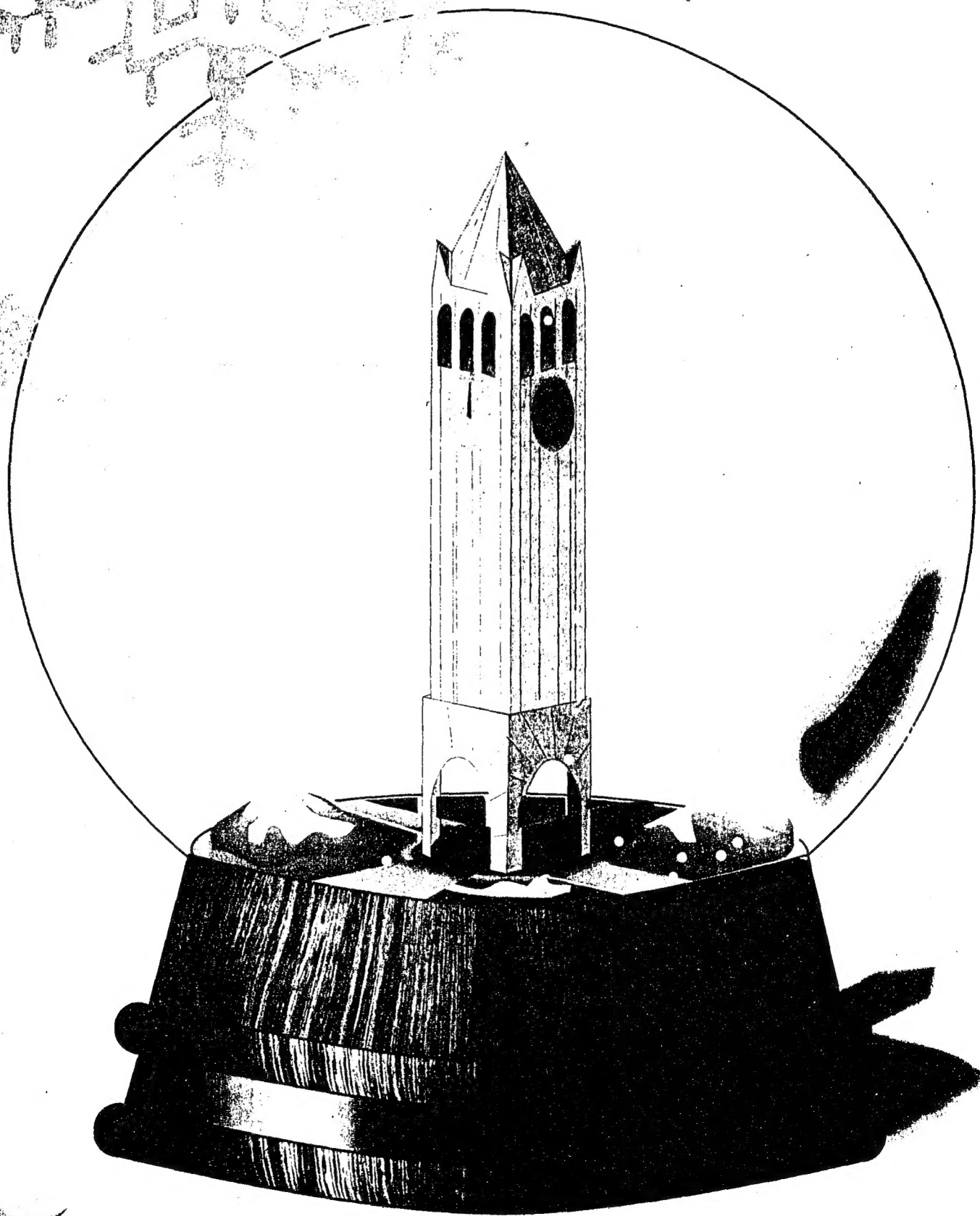
The

Gateway

Holiday Issue

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December 10, 1996

Holidays for Charitable Giving, Sharing

By KARA SCHWEISS

During November and December, many charitable organizations increase their efforts to acquire donations. More advertising, special promotions with holiday themes, and even workplace fundraising drives capitalize on the

season's spirit of giving.

Carm Schneckloth, Development Manager for the Omaha Food Bank, said his organization relies on greatly increased food contributions typically donated near the holidays.

"We feed the same number of people in July as we do in December; we use December to stock up," he said. "We have more promotions, and we ask companies, organizations, and groups to organize food drives for us."

Schneckloth said the comparatively low number of food donations during the rest of the year does not make him any less appreciative of the community's lopsided giving or less grateful for its generosity.

"People are still caring in July. I'm not pointing my finger and saying 'naughty, naughty,'" he said.

Helene Quigley, marketing and communications manager for the American Red Cross, said her organization does not significantly step up its efforts to attain more contributions during the holidays.

"We do the same thing during the holidays which we always do, and that is teaching people to prepare for, cope with, and respond to emergencies," she

said. "We do that all year round."

Although fundraising efforts remain essentially the same, Quigley said the need for American Red Cross services increases during the holiday season. The food pantry is one program which becomes especially active in November and December.

"During the holidays when people spend every little bit, they tend to run out of some things," she said. "Then they come to us."

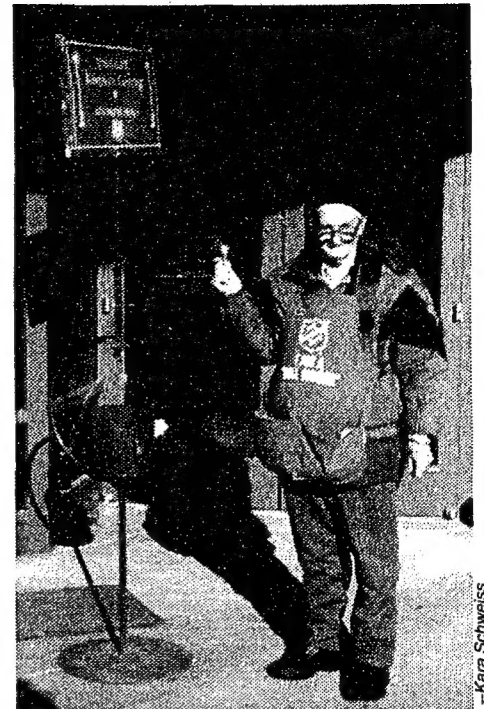
Through a partnership with Hy-Vee food stores and ConAgra, the pantry is kept full during the holiday season to ensure community need is met.

"We get that little extra help during the holidays," Quigley said.

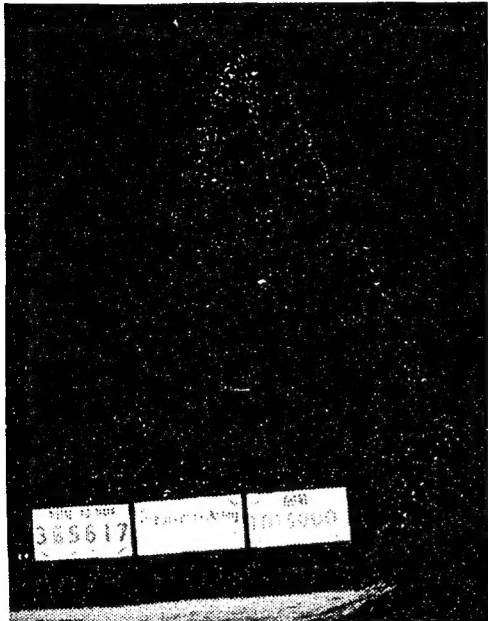
Another unfortunate problem associated with cold weather is the increase in fires influenced by such factors as unattended candles or accidents associated with heating devices or fireplaces, Quigley said. Assisting the victims of these fires is part of her organization's disaster service.

"The Red Cross has to respond to those incidents," she said.

-- see Giving, page 3--



Roben Hanson (above) is a retired electrical engineer and Salvation Army bell ringer. "I just wanted to help out," he said.



The Salvation Army's annual Tree of Lights is located at the corner of 72nd and Dodge streets.

International Students Share Holiday Traditions, New Experiences

By SAVONDA NICOLE JOHNSON

Imagine being thousands of miles away from home, family, and friends during the holiday season. This is the reality for many international students this holiday season.

Ai Hasegawa, a junior international studies major, won't be going home this New Year's. "I am not going home to Japan this Christmas, so I am going to celebrate New Year's with another Japanese friend," Hasegawa said. "We are going to a traditional Japanese supper complete with *Osechi-ryori*."

Senior Amali Weeratunga won't be going back to her home land in Sri Lanka, either. "I just put up a Christmas tree in my apartment," she said. "I tend to get sad around the holidays. In Sri Lanka we go to midnight mass, and eat

Breuther, a traditional Christmas cake."

Ekoka Molindo, director of International Student Services, discussed the different options they provide for international students during the holiday season. "This is a very difficult time for international students," he said. "This is the time to be with families. I know some students will raise large phone bills because they are always calling their family."

Some international students are lucky enough to be able to go home for the holidays. Freshman Bhavana Patel will be returning to her home in Essex, England. Patel is an Anglo-Indian and celebrates the Hindu religion. "My major holiday of Diwalia was just celebrated around the Thanksgiving holiday," she said.

"Diwalia is the celebration of lights and is the Hindu new year."

Although international students like to celebrate their own traditional holidays, many also like to experience the American holidays.

"We are lucky to have so many members of the community to support our students who won't be returning to their homes over the holidays," Molindo said. "If I have a student who doesn't have anywhere for the holidays I can find a family from Trinity Interdenominational Church, or from Christ Community Church that would be more than willing to let him or her celebrate with their family."

"I celebrated Christmas with an American family last year and I really enjoyed it,"

Weeratunga said. "I love American holiday traditions. The food and Christmas spirit are wonderful."

"In International Student Services, there are organizations for each ethnicity," Molindo said. "For example, the Korean Student Association celebrated a Korean Thanksgiving this past October. These organizations allow students of the same nationality to congregate and celebrate their traditional customs."

This year, International Student Services was invited to a Christmas Party at Trinity Interdenominational Church Dec. 14. "This is what international students want," Molindo said. "They want to experience the American culture, too."



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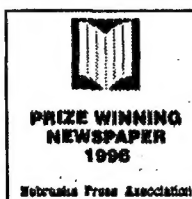
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One per student, 25 cents each.

Holiday Bargain-Hunters Keep Jingle of Cash Registers To Low Hum

BY COLLEEN DEBAISE
College Press Service

CHICAGO—The holiday shopping season is here, and for most students, that means opening a pencil-thin wallet to buy presents for loved ones.

"Anything I can't afford is going on my credit card," said Maureen Golga, 21, a DePaul University junior. "So I'll just be paying it off the rest of my life, along with my student loans."

Stop right there! Presents for family, friends and even your favorite pros don't have to cost a fortune. With only a few dollars and lots of creativity, you can give someone a fabulous present.

"To make the ultimate cheap gift, go to a coin store and get coins that have a hole in them," suggested Adrienne Harvey, 19, a sophomore at Stetson University in Florida. Buy different colored silk cord, and make necklaces. "It'll only put you out \$5-\$10, and you can make them all different to give to all of

your friends," she said.

Jason Buehler, 19, a Miami University of Ohio freshman, offers two words of advice for holiday shopping: thrift store.

"For the past two years, I've gotten people things from the thrift store," he said. "Thrift stores are the absolute best places to get gifts. Even if it's dumb, they'll laugh."

Shannon MacLaughlan, 29, a Stetson junior, said she fills small baskets with tins of flavored coffee or cocoa. "They are inexpensive to make, and you can even use stockings instead of baskets," she said. "They make great gifts for relatives and extended family members."

It's all good advice for those students whose generous impulses might leave them with a depleted bank account come the New Year. According to a recent Gallup poll, the average shopper expects to spend about \$800 on presents this holiday season. Of course, that forecast comes from a poll of 1,009 consumers with a mean income of \$32,730. Most college students, even those with full-time jobs, don't earn nearly that much.

Maxine Sweet, vice president of consumer education for Experian, a credit information services company, offers tips for students short on cash.

First, to save extra money for holiday shopping, "consider skipping those costly snacks from vending machines," she suggested. "Think about other treats like video rental and magazines that you can do without . . . in the spirit of holidaygiving."

Also, "an act of kindness is worth more than any holiday gift money can buy," she said. "Look at your gift-giving list. Would an elderly relative rather have a room painted or a garage cleaned than a cheese-of-the-world assortment pack?" A student might offer free babysitting services to an older sister or brother with young children, she said.

And just spending time with your family can be a great gift. "It doesn't cost a cent, and it makes the season truly special," she said.

Golga, of DePaul, said she always has that idea in mind when she tells her parents she'll take them out to dinner as a gift. "I take them some place where they have gift certificates, and so I just just buy the drinks," she said. "But they just like that I spend time with them because I'm never

home."

For friends, Golga said she will probably give her old standby: candles. "They're always cheap. I always buy my friends candles," she said. "They're probably sick of it."

DePaul senior Jason Brown, 23, ticks off all the people on his shopping list: "My folks, my brother, my sister-in-law, my other brother, my next-door neighbors. Then I have my girlfriend, and her folks and her brother." Brown works full-time at a mountain outfitter store. "I make decent money," he said. "Most of the gifts I buy are from my store, so I get, like, 70 percent off. So that's a little easier."

A good gift idea, he said, is a subscription to a beer-of-the-month club. "You can pay the first couple of months, then they can pay if they want to keep it up," he said.

Melissa Morris, 21, a Miami senior, said she likes to give gift certificates. "You can always give gift certificates to music stores, like a \$5 one," she said. "Then they can go buy a CD, and it will be real cheap."

Even with a host of inexpensive gift ideas, holiday shopping is still out of the question for some college students. "I don't think I'm going to do any this year. I have no money," said James McArthur, 21, a student at Wright Community College in Chicago. "The greatest gift is no gift at all."

--from Giving, page 2--

Salvation Army bell ringers collect donations near the holidays from shoppers or pedestrians, usually at grocery stores, shopping malls, and department or discount stores. Their numbers and visibility heavily promote the Salvation Army's holiday fundraising efforts.

American Red Cross Disaster Services relocated to a new, larger building at the end of October. This move is intended to make existing services more efficient and readily available to the community members who need them. Quigley said demand for programs related to the cold weather has already increased since the move. "(In December) We just do more of what we usually do," she said.

Schnecko said the Omaha Food Bank counts on the predictable generosity of people motivated by the sentiment of the holiday season. "We are creatures of habit," he said. "This is the time of year we all think of hunger and helping."



Gifts were easier to handle when we could just leave it up to Santa.

—Steve Houston



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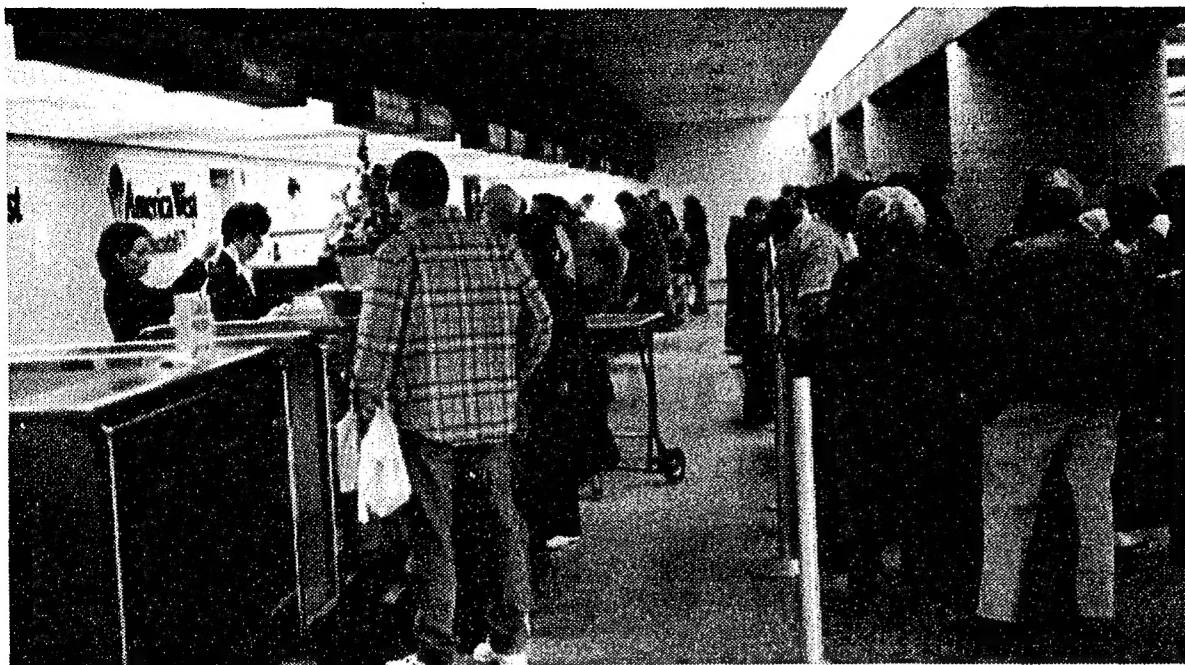
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Holiday travelers will have to be patient this year, as long lines will plague travelers travelling by plane, train, or automobile.

How to Handle Treacherous Winter Travel

BY BRIAN J. TODD

As classes wind down and finals week is fast approaching, many students' thoughts turn to packing up their cars and driving over the river and through the woods to their parents' homes for the holidays.

The Christmas season is perhaps one of the busiest driving times of the year, but all those motorists on the icy Midwestern roads could spell trouble for holiday drivers.

But by using a little common sense and planning ahead for an emergency, holiday drivers can prevent a lot of potential problems that occur when driving in cold winter weather.

To avoid problems in the first place, the American Automobile Association (AAA) of Michigan suggests a 12-point check for your car when driving in the winter. They suggest checking your battery terminals for corrosion which can cause your car not to start. Checking fluids like antifreeze, oil, brake fluid, power steering fluid and transmission fluid. These will help keep your car running smoothly in severe conditions.

To ensure that you can see where you are going, the auto club suggests filling your wiper fluid and checking your wiper blades.

AAA Michigan also suggests making sure your car's belts and hoses are in good shape before taking a trip. Checking for a clean air filter is a must, as are working lights so other motorists can see what you are doing.

Finally, AAA Michigan suggests that before traveling in

winter that drivers make sure their tires are fully inflated and have sufficient tread to grip the road in wet or icy conditions.

One tip that AAA Michigan adds that is not part of a pre-trip checklist is to keep your car's gas tank as full as possible to avoid condensation inside the tank which can lead to gasoline freeze.

If you should happen to have car troubles while on the road, the Illinois State Police offer several helpful suggestion to avoid compounding your problems:

Stay with your car. By running your car for short intervals and keeping your heater on, you can stay warm while waiting for help to arrive. However, the ISP recommends keeping a window open to ensure that carbon monoxide does not build up to dangerous levels in the car.

The ISP also suggests packing a survival kit in a coffee can in case you are stranded on the road. The kit includes matches, a coffee can with three holes placed around the side, three pieces of twine about 20 inches long and three safety pins. The can should be hung from the ceiling of the car to melt water. Also included in the survival kit, the ISP suggests several packets of instant soup, hot chocolate and other dried or dehydrated foods.

Motorists should also keep a few pairs of thick socks, gloves and a blanket to help keep warm.

Coming to a front yard near you

Many Omahans will sacrifice time, money and frostbite as they decorate their houses, both inside and outside, for the holidays. From everything to lights in the tree to a lighted fire-breathing dragon wearing a stocking hat, it's all being done in a yard near you.



-Lisa O'Bradovich



-Lisa O'Bradovich

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Christmas Shopping Season Could Spell Bargains—Or Not

KNIGHT-RIDDER/TRIBUNE NEWS

SAN JOSE, Calif.—If you want to figure out your chances of finding bargains during the holiday shopping season, don't bother dusting off your old economics textbook or buying new batteries for your calculator. Just take a look at the calendar.

A late Thanksgiving means there are five fewer shopping days available for our national spending spree than last year. In addition, since Christmas Eve falls on a Tuesday, many would-be shoppers will be at work not dashing through the malls in search of last-minute bargains.

This shortening of the holiday shopping season means Thanksgiving weekend—the kick-off to the holiday season—was even more important than usual.

If sales were strong, stores are likely to resist sharp discounts across a wide array of items. If sales were soft, retailers will be tempted to cut prices sooner since there are fewer days to make up for lost traffic.

The best way to determine which prices might be lowered if you delay purchases is to make believe you're a merchant and ask yourself: What products won't sell well after Christmas?

Santa Claus sweat shirts, say, or other seasonal items top this list. Also, expensive toys and jewelry targeted to gift givers.

In consumer electronic products, look for items that are technologically threatened, that is, high-tech gear in categories where next-generation products are waiting the wings. (Prices have been falling, for example, for Pentium-powered PCs at speeds of less than 166 megahertz.) On the other hand, don't expect significant price cuts on items whose appeal outlasts the holiday season—appliances, compact discs, batteries, paint and housewares.

There are also a few stores with precisely defined target audiences, carefully nurtured customer loyalty and exclusive products that

have been able to wean shoppers away from promotional sales.

At Talbotts, which sells classic women's apparel to an upscale clientele, 97 percent of the inventory is made up of items unavailable elsewhere. Talbotts shoppers know that if they want bargains, they'll have to wait until Dec. 26.

Merchants, of course, have been planning their tactics for a year and their strategy has been simple: Keep inventories lean to avoid the need for deep-discount clearance sales and do everything possible to encourage shopping before Thanksgiving.

So what will shoppers be seeking?

As Americans continue to cocoon, analysts expect gifts for the home that can be used by the entire family will do well. Beth Cintas of Santa Clara, Calif., for example, is buying her husband John a \$159 Weber barbecue. (Shhh, it's a surprise!) "He loves to cook out," she says. "He's raised it to an art form."

And as the barrier between home and work becomes increasingly porous, computer furniture and home office supplies are also likely to sell well. Tom and Cheri Herbert of San Jose, Calif., for instance, just bought their first personal computer a Sony. It's not unpacked yet, but they're already looking for a computer stand and chair.

Befitting the growth of consumer confidence, luxury items have been selling strongly recently. An example: cashmere items, which have been hot for both

Lands' End and Victoria's Secret.

And the cigar craze has set off a boom in humidors.

For children, playthings and apparel linked to movies such as "Space Jam" and "101 Dalmatians" are receiving tremendous marketing pushes. Wal-Mart is expected to benefit as the exclusive retail outlet for Talking

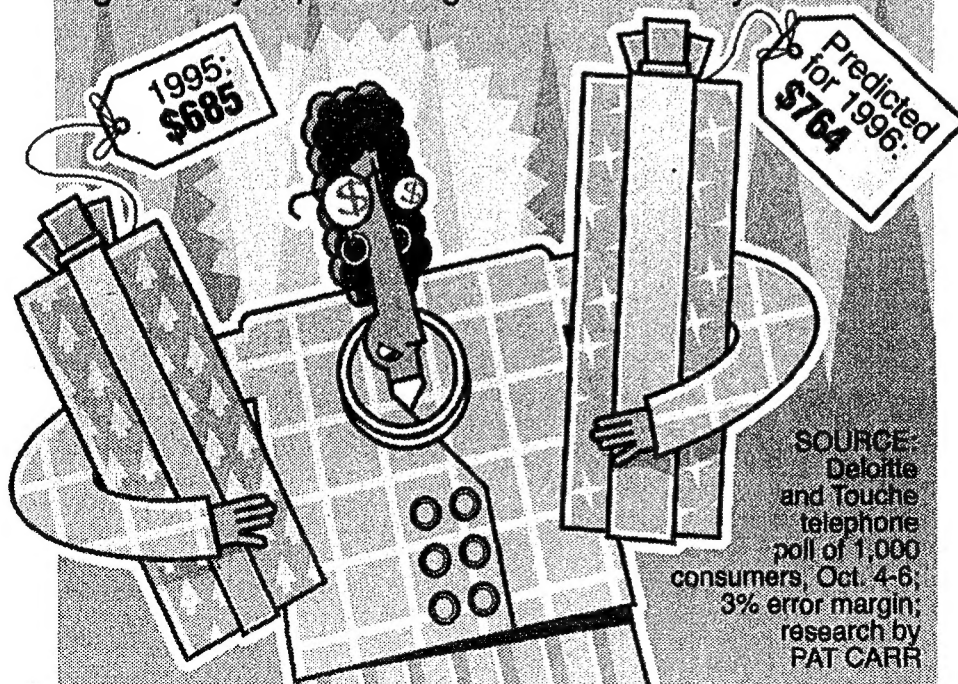
Turbo Man, a \$24.96 battery-operated gizmo that's the object of Arnold Schwarzenegger's attention in his new film, "Jingle All the Way."

In consumer electronics, WebTV a set-top box that allows a television screen to display Internet sites is expected to do well in many parts of the country.

BizFacts

Happy holidays for retailers

Consumers expect to spend 12% more on holiday gifts this year, according to a recent survey.



KRT Infographics/PAUL TRAP

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Page 5

Are you SAD? More than Just the Blues

BY KATHY DALEY

The winter months are finally upon us. Besides snow, these months bring cold temperatures, runny noses, and those dreaded finals.

There is, however, something else that winter months bring that many may not be aware they are suffering from, which is the disorder called seasonal affective disorder, or SAD.

SAD is most common in the northern states or provinces and has just recently been brought to public attention.

In a story done on collegiate hockey players, in the September issue of *The Journal of Athletic Training*, a study revealed that the symptoms of SAD can be easily overlooked.

Many people who suffer from this disorder are not even aware they have it. In one particular case, a 19 year old hockey player had deteriorated during the fall practice season. Due to his coach's concern, this deterioration was further looked into. His symptoms included decreased energy, decreased physical capabilities, lack of interest in social functions, increased appetite (especially cravings for carbohydrates), increased laziness, and a lack of sexual interest.

The player was given a complete medical examination and evaluation, including drug screenings and tests for illnesses such as hypothyroidism, infectious mononucleosis and anemia.

The exam, however, revealed no reason for his fatigue. As a result, his diagnosis of winter SAD was determined to be the likely explanation.

After light therapy treatment, his condition quickly improved. Light therapy is simply allowing the patient to be exposed to light. In this particular case, a commercial lux light box was used and exposed him to two 30 minute sessions daily, one in the morning and one at night.

Even though this particular study was done on young male hockey players, young women are the most likely people to suffer from SAD more than any other group.

The progression of this disorder can be limited by doing a few simple things. In the book entitled *Winter Blues*, by Norman E. Rosenthal, MD tips include trying to live in rooms full of light, avoid eating heavy foods, eating balanced meals, awareness of alcohol consumption, avoiding caffeine, surrounding yourself with positive friends, practicing stress management, exercising regularly, fighting insomnia with music, and waking up every morning at least at 8 a.m. to prevent a sluggish feeling.

Keeping Sanity During the Season

BY RENEE NOVY

With the holiday season in full swing and finals quickly approaching, the universal obstacle to enjoy the season is stress. With so many demands pressed upon us simultaneously from family, school, work and friends, how are we supposed to navigate through this maelstrom without losing our minds?

"Everyone says the best way to cope with stress is to try to relax—but the real question is how to relax," said Dr. Joseph LaVoie, professor of psychology at UNO. "To get through both finals and the holiday season, students are going to have to decide what things are important and what things are less important."

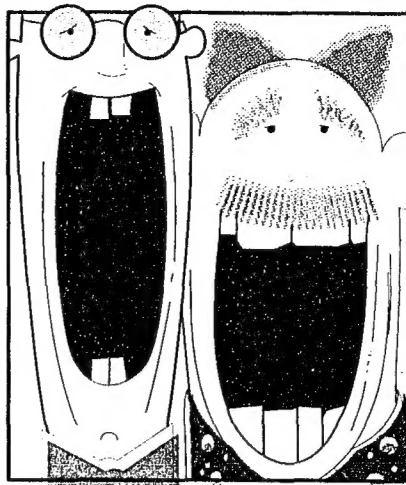
Mentally preparing for the onslaught of visiting relatives, holiday shopping, end of year deadlines at work, 10 page papers, study break parties and the inevitable final-upon-final crunch is crucial for success (if not merely survival), but not always possible for everyone. But a certain level of preparation can make this season run more smoothly.

"You have to make known to others what your schedule is like," LaVoie said. For a student to finish the semester successfully so he can enjoy the holiday season for what it is meant to be—a time to celebrate, to enjoy family and friends, and to honor the beliefs each of us holds—he must undertake the difficult task of dividing priorities between family and school demands.

Especially in the case of minimizing conflict on the home front, Dr. LaVoie suggests making known to family members and others your schedule and your deadlines. "You've got to tell family members, 'Look, I have these demands placed upon me, and I know you're here, and I will try to spend as much time with you as possible...' Make yourself clear to them, but they will need to understand that you do have priorities to actualize."

For many, this is what can cause major problems during this time for celebration. Many people do not enjoy that level

Holidays driving you crazy?



of open communication and understanding with family members. Add to that recipe a healthy dose of the inconveniences that arise during the holidays for everyone, not just students and see what happens. Incorporate these occasional ingredients: family reunions that include feuding members here and there, deciding where to stage the Christmas or Hanukkah celebration without offending Aunt Mae, Mom, Step-Mom or all 3, deciding whose parents to visit for holiday get-togethers, those unexpected dinner-time skeletal closet emergencies, introducing newfound loves to the family members you didn't have that choice with, the haz-

ards of shopping with its bustling crowds, holiday traffic, and the occasional pickpocket, ad infinitum...

It is easy to see how many people have a yanked chain that rattles as loudly as old Marley's at the Playhouse around this time of year.

Yet the holidays are a time to celebrate, relax, share, believe and to love. In spite of all these potential obstacles, how can any sort of goodwill towards one another be maintained?

"When others' priorities conflict with our own, the best thing to do is to focus in on our own priorities," LaVoie advises. "I know that many people would confuse this with selfishness. But when pressures rise and you're unhappy, you need to break away and take time to relax. If you do, you'll come out of all this okay. Not everybody will be happy, but you will be. In the end, that's what's important. If you're not okay, when all this is past, who will repair the damage done to you?"

OK. So you've prepared a tentative list of things to do to help you chill-out for the holiday season. Prioritize. Find time to relax. Make your needs/intentions known... what else is missing?

Remember that not every piece of advice you solicit will

--see Sanity, page 7--

GOT THE HOLIDAY BLUES?

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All Kids Want for Christmas...

By PAT JUSTICE

The search is on in Omaha for this season's most-hyped toys. The most advertised and popular items are scarce and crowds can be unruly as they try to get their hands on items. Parents don't want children to be disappointed when the longed-for item isn't under the tree on Christmas morning.

The most popular item this year has been Sesame Street resident, the red furred Tickle Me Elmo talking toy. It has sold out in Omaha and shipments are erratic. If Elmo is stocked, it sells out within hours.

Holiday Barbie, this year clad in burgundy, is another sure sellout item. Holiday Barbie has been unavailable in most area toy stores for weeks, however one store got a surprise shipment last week. Toy Station, 4524 West Center Road, received 17 Holiday Barbies on Monday.

Owner Mary Schlosser said, "It was a mistake. I didn't expect them but we were glad to have them."

By Friday afternoon, only two Holiday Barbies remained in the store, the only ones to be found in Omaha. Schlosser did not advertise these dolls after they were received.

Nintendo 64 is sold out area-wide. Demand for this toy has topped that of most previous game systems, leaving both children and adults frustrated with the absence of it from the toy store shelves.

Other popular children's toys include characters Buzz Lightyear and Woody from *Toy Story*.

Michael Wayne, assistant manager of Kaybee Toys at Crossroads Mall listed his top sellers:

Tickle Me Elmo, X-Men figures, craft kits, megablocks (their brand of blocks similar to Legos), anything from *101 Dalmations*, and video games.

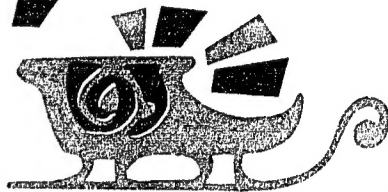
"Tickle Me Elmo is basically sold out nationwide," said Wayne. "Out of anything, that is the hottest item around."

Dan Taleno, sales associate at Super Target, 4001 N. 132nd Street, listed the top sellers:

1. Tickle Me Elmo
2. Holiday Barbie
3. Hand-held video games
4. Crawling Mickie and Minnie Mouse
5. Doodle Bear
6. Legos
7. Anything Barbie
8. 3-D puzzles

The top sellers of the season:

1. Tickle Me Elmo
2. Holiday Barbie
3. Hand-held video games
4. Crawling Mickie and Minnie Mouse
5. Doodle Bear
6. Legos
7. Anything Barbie
8. 3-D puzzles
9. Laser Challenge
10. *Space Jam* toys



9. Laser Challenge
10. *Space Jam* toys

Nintendo 64 was also mentioned by Target as having sold out quickly but they have not been able to keep enough of those in stock. Of the items listed as top sellers, Tickle Me Elmo, Holiday Barbie and Nintendo 64 have been the most scarce.

Best selling toys for adults, are harder to define. Personal

interest items are diverse. Clothes, CD's, stereos, and computer items are always in demand.

More grown-up best sellers are listed by Sam Everson, manager of Shopko at 14445 West Center Road. Lava lamps, whose molten blobs of colorful goo captivated young people in the '60s have reappeared as a popular gift item this Christmas. Bread makers are another popular item, with a more practical application. Ab toners, and anything geared at reducing midriff bulge are also hot items.

--from Sanity, page 6--

work. Just as everyone has his own need to address and to realize, each person may have a different way for managing these situations.

"Around this time of year, we always have things going on in the house. Of course, I'm usually stuck helping my mother clean, cook, and all that fun stuff," says freshman Colleen Fransiscus. "When tension rises, I just try to get away from it. Like when I'm studying and I get frustrated, I try to take time to listen to music or anything else to get my mind off the problem. When I feel better, I can go back to study and things usually work out a lot better."

Dealing with family and work schedules in tandem ignites harrowing conflicts for others.

"I spend a lot of time working around this time of year since I'm a waitress," said sophomore Ana Merizalde. "Needless to say, I don't have a whole lot of time left to socialize with family or friends right now. I basically try to keep in touch with friends and family members, let them know what I'm doing and why I can't always be around."

For some, the holidays happen easier, but not without certain effort.

"Being with my family isn't very stressful," said Jody Steiner. "I do have a lot of things to do, but I try to be around my family as much as possible. I also take time to relax with friends after I've spent time with my family. That way the holidays are good for everyone, and I've done something with as many of the people I care about as possible, and get as much done as I can for school, also."

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Opinions & Editorials

Letters

'Congratulations'

Dear Editor:

I want to congratulate you and your staff for the wonderful job you've done with the *Gateway* this semester. Your coverage of campus news, intramural sports and athletics is the best I can remember during the past 25 years. Keep it up next semester!

Rosalie Melches

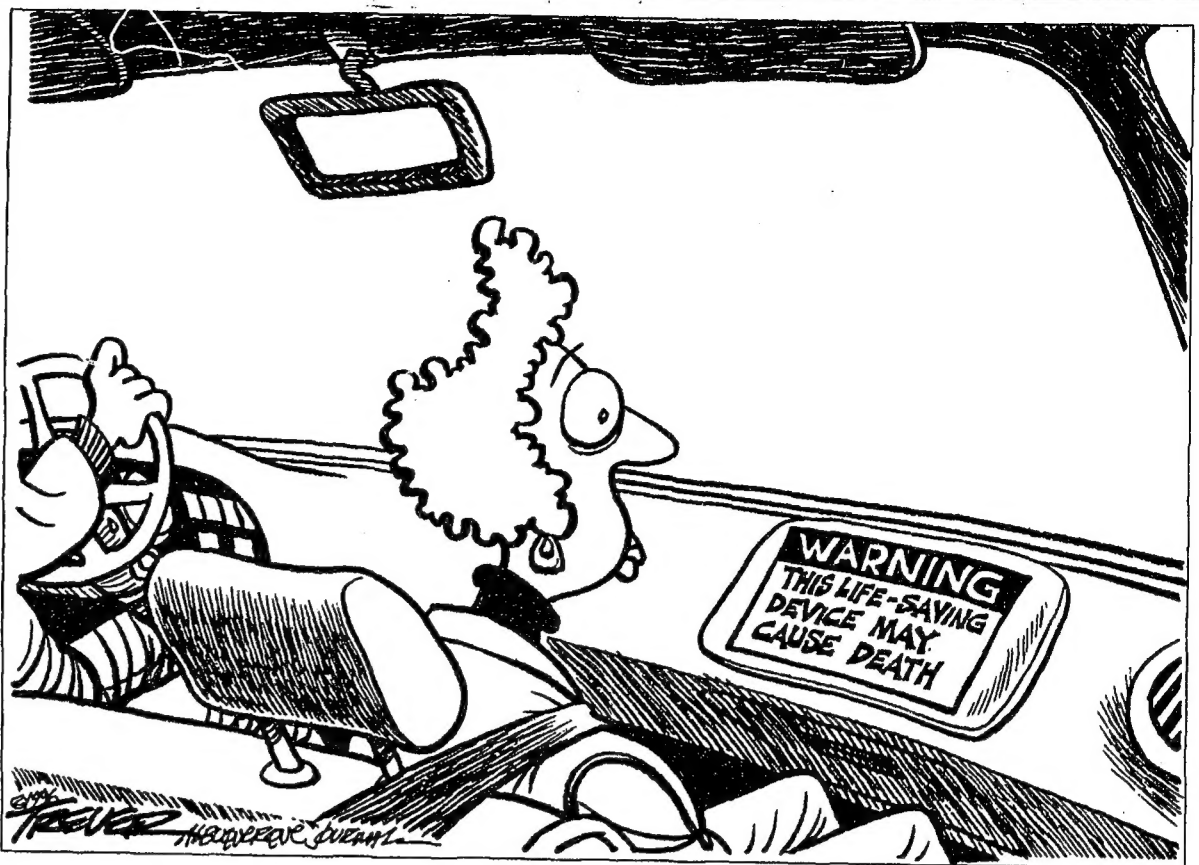
Gateway Student Publications Manager 1972-1994

'I am Offended'

Dear Editor:

I am and have been consistently offended by Sean Guilfoyle's writing. He appears to be a person who is very insecure about himself, (The Blonde Parking Column). I also find it depressing that he has no respect for the President. If you don't like the man, at least respect the office he holds. And by the way, not only democrats are involved in scandals and have skeletons in their closets. Richard Nixon (Watergate), and Ronald Reagan (Iran-Contra) just to name a few republicans, were raping this country while in office. Yet under the reasoning Guilfoyle uses, they're OK, because they're republicans. Instead of always looking at the negative, and bashing Clinton, why don't you use your college education and think. If you think some, maybe you won't appear so ignorant and hateful.

Stephen Croucher



From OJ to Osborne

All they Want for Christmas...

When I was a kid, Christmas was a special time for me. I would antagonize my siblings for a hellacious 11 months. Once Dec. 1 surfaced on the calendar, I was holier than the Pope. Anything and everything was beyond me. I didn't take advantage of my siblings (just my parents, a.k.a. Santa Claus).

Hey, at least I was good for a month!

Kids today expect presents. They think it's their God-given right, not realizing it is a privilege.

I remember conjuring many drafts of the items I put on my "wish list." No item was too unattainable, no price too outlandish.

Keeping these thoughts in mind, I have composed a Christmas wish list for some famous, and some infamous members of the media spotlight, both locally and on a national scale.

UNO Head Football Coach Pat Behrns — A lifetime contract.

President Bill Clinton — A minority interest in McDonald's, supervising the outflow of Big Macs.

UNO Office of Financial Aid — The ability to project

student loan disbursements better than meteorologists predict the weather.

O.J. Simpson — A new pair of gloves (seems he "misplaced" his other pair).

Bob Dole — "Super" senior citizen discount at Sizzler.

UNL Head Football Coach Tom Osborne — A shot at a third consecutive national championship
UNO Student President/Regent Craig Richter — An "on-the-record" statement, a historic first for any newspaper.

James Carville — A muzzle.

Mary Matalin (Republican wife of James Carville) — Walking papers. These two sure do make strange bedfellows.

UNO Head Volleyball Coach Rose Shires — A championship banner to hang from the rafters at UNO.

The New York Yankees — Free fittings for their World Series rings.

Incoming UNO Student President/Regent Jason Winterboer — An endless supply of Ralph Lauren items in

the bookstore.

Children of Michael Jackson and Madonna — Life-time therapy for dysfunctional family life.

Al D'Amato — A swift kick in the butt from fellow Republicans.

UNO Campus Security — Endless supply of invisible ink for their pens (when writing tickets.)

Neb. State Senator Ernie Chambers — A three-piece suit.

Dennis Rodman — Gift certificate to Victoria's Secret.
UNO Greeks — May the kegs never run dry and the women never sober up.

Beavis and Butt-head — The top-grossing movie of all time.

California — A sharp nosedive into the Pacific Ocean. Recent passage of the marijuana law would conjure up painful "Woodstock flashbacks."

Last, but not least, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, or being politically correct, a Happy Holiday season to everyone on campus (even the blondes). This first semester has been interesting, to say the least. Hopefully, the rest will be as invigorating as this one has been.



Santa: Naughty, Nice and Not Politically Correct

Christmas is just around the corner and all the little girls and boys are anxiously awaiting a visit from Santa Claus. But is Santa; a.k.a. Kris Kringle, a.k.a. Father Christmas, a.k.a. Saint Nicholas, the kind of role model we want our kids to emulate? I think not!

Santa, if that's his real name, is perhaps one of the most vile people in the world. He has committed crimes. He is an insensitive lout. And I say we put a stop to this man who hides his illegal and immoral deeds behind the veil of Christmas.

Here is my list of the top ten offenses of Santa Claus.

1. Santa - Enslaver of Our Animal Brethren. Every Christmas Eve, on what has been glamorized as "a cold winter's night," Santa shackles nine helpless reindeer, one of which he has mutated for his own greedy purposes, to his sleigh and forces them to haul his heavy load of goods (not to mention his own obese body) through the air on a 24-hour joyride. And how has he escaped the wrath of the ASPCA and PETA? Bribes, folks, bribes.

2. Santa - Sweatshop Boss. At the cold North Pole, Santa keeps his employees warm by forcing them to work year-round making toys so he can get the credit for the spirit of giving. And what, pray tell, do the poor elves get? No wages. No retirement benefits. No stock options. No insurance. Nothing. Zilch. Zippo. Just more of the same, working their little fingers to the bone.

3. Unequal Hiring Practices at the North Pole (Elves Only). And Santa keeps his little slave labor force in check by not hiring outside workers who might help unite the elves in their struggle for fair treatment in the workplace. There are no unions at the North Pole, just despondent workers living a

life of oppression.

4. The Fat, White Euro-Oppressor. And who is the source of that oppression? Why, Santa, that's who. Mr. Kringle is just another one of your typical, WASP, fat cats making his living on the backs of the peoples he has forced to work for his mighty empire.

5. Santa - Life in a Fortress of Solitude. But unlike Superman, Santa's Fortress of Solitude has merely enabled him to avoid the world around him. Santa has become more and more distant from the people he claims to give generously to each year. Does he even know the price of a loaf of bread or a gallon of milk? Somehow I doubt it. Santa has isolated himself from society in an obvious attempt to place himself above the law.

6. Santa - Illegal Border Crosser. In one of the most blatant violations of the world's national boundaries, Santa spends his Christmas Eve crossing one border after another without bothering to stop and present his passport. Folks, the sovereignty of nations is at stake here, but Mr. Kringle with his flippant disregard of international law does not seem to care one iota about national security or the sanctity of the boundaries which separate the nations.

7. Violations of Restricted Airspace. The illegal aspects of Mr. Claus' yearly flight does not stop at the willful disregard of national boundaries. He also flies his sleigh over restricted air-space within nations. Over air force bases. Above the White House. Over nuclear missile silos. Santa flies wherever he pleases without regard to the national security implications in this country or any other. And why has he not been shot down by the military for these unlawful acts? Bribes, folks, high-level bribes.

8. The Denial of Due Process. We tell our children to be good, or Santa will know and leave them a lump of coal for Christmas if they are bad. But how fair is Jolly Ol' Saint Nick when it comes to deciding who has been naughty and who has been nice? This man is the judge, jury and executioner when it comes to the Christmas dreams of boys and girls. Does Santa offer any appeals? No. Does he listen to mitigating circumstances? Not hardly. Santa, the first and last word on who gets a new bike and who gets a lump of coal, makes his harsh judgments without answering to anyone. There are no checks and balances with Santa.

9. Illegal In-flight Dumping. Folks, it is a long night for the reindeer on Christmas Eve and Santa does not allow potty breaks. Just don't get caught under his flight path. Need I say more?

10. Breaking and Entering. Yes, folks, Mr. Naughty-and-Nice seems more naughty than nice during his once-a-year nightly round. He enters our homes. He sneaks around. He says he's only leaving presents, but I wonder if that sack is empty when he performs his witchcraft and flies up the chimney. Have you checked the silver on Christmas morning? Or your wallets? Are your daughters truly safe with this dirty old man (he lives with a bunch of elves and reindeer, folks) walking around your house in the dead of night, leering at them in their beds?

So, what can we do, folks? Well, for starters we can stop leaving him milk and cookies. With luck, he will pass our houses by and go on to the home of his next victim. Next, we should catch this man and make him accountable for the deeds he has done in the name of Christmas.

I say this is the year we rise up and fight back against Santa Claus.

Oh, and Merry Christmas!



The 'Dreaded Time' is Now Here

Two weeks ago, I went Christmas-caroling at Fontenelle Forest. There were small children and grandparents there...and one middle-aged couple on their first date...ahem. As we walked through the crisp evening air, surrounded by the silhouettes of tall trees and the off-key voices of various folks, it occurred to me that the time of year I most dread is upon us. Yes, the Christmas shopping season is here.

Now you might think that since I have finally been exposed to the so-called joys of shopping (see Oct. 8 column), that I would be looking forward to many mall excursions, perhaps accompanied by my friend and shopping mentor, Kelly.

Wrong.

In spite of the fact that I now know *how* to do it, I really don't like it. Actually, that's not *quite* true. I enjoy moseying through the aisles at Target (Tar-ja'y) and picking up the occasional sale-priced appliance, some new socks, and maybe a new sweater...for *ME*. However, going to *any* store filled with frenzied credit-card holders with long lists and/or screaming children in their hands, does not exactly set my heart a-pounding with joyful anticipation. To be honest, the visceral reaction I *do* receive from that thought more closely resembles the hairs standing up on the back of my neck, similar to what I experience when someone draws a fingernail across a blackboard in my immediate vicinity.

However, I supremely enjoy gift *giving*. This particular gift-giving season, I look forward with especially great joy because I have been given back the gift of my grandbabies. Both of my children have seen the proverbial light. My young son has returned home in time for Thanksgiving, and my older one called me last Wednesday to inform me of his intention to pack up his little family and return to Omaha "where there are people who love us, Mom." I have done the happy dance and am looking forward to watching my 3-year-old grandson and almost-one-year-old granddaughter as they open their gifts in *my* living room.

Most of my life, I have felt that the most satisfying part of this mid-winter's holiday is the sparkle in the eyes of the very young. I think I inherited this from my folks. In my family, until

I was about 7 years old, Santa brought the tree down the chimney with him, decorated it, and put the presents under it before sitting down to eat the cookies and milk we left for him.

My mother insisted that the 'true' holiday season began with Dec. 25 and ran for the 12 days after. So even after I realized that Santa was not really a physical being, we decorated the tree Christmas Eve, where it stayed in all its splendor until Jan. 6.

My mother is not only a powerful woman, she is always, *always* right. To this day, I feel the need to wait until the night before Christmas to really throw myself into the spirit of Yule. Perhaps this explains my reticence about the spirit of shopping.

I have begun this year by ordering a couple of items from catalogues. However, the true task will need to take place, no doubt, at a large emporium whose primary merchandise consists of toys, toys, toys, and toys. (The dreaded Toys R Us.)

The last time I shopped there was last January after Emma was born. Jon and I went to purchase a baby-doll. I walked in and asked the young woman at the counter, "Where can I find a baby-doll?"

She looked at me with a little frown and asked, "What *kind* of baby-doll? Do you, like, want one that walks, talks, wets, or, like, stands on its head?"

"No," I said naively, "I just want a plain old baby-doll." Well, we went round and round about that until finally I found myself in one of the two aisles devoted exclusively to dolls. I am pleased to announce that after an overwhelming search, we found a soft baby-doll, the perfect size for a two-year-old, brand new older brother. She or he was dressed in a gown and blanket, but by the time we arrived at the checkout, she or he was naked. I knew we had achieved success.

This year, I intend to be the best Gramma in the world. To face the crowds at the toy store, then to exit with the perfect gifts for my babies. Then I am going to wrap them in boxes large enough to transmogrify into space ships, and use twice as much of the noisiest wrapping paper I can find, and then prepare for the satisfying experience of sitting back to enjoy the

sparkling eyes of the offspring of my offspring as they open their gifts, discard them, and climb into the containers. Whereupon they will play for hours.

The presence of small children in my life can turn me from a Grinch into Ms. Sally Claus in the time it takes to hang a handmade (by a 6-year-old) ornament on a crooked little tree.

Happy shopping everyone, don't forget the littlest ones, and if you have none of your own, find a couple of relatives or friends from which you can rent some. Then just sit back and enjoy.

SALLY LANSDALE

Columnist

'Religious Should Not Dictate Who Gets Marriage License'

Dear Editor:

The Hawaiian judge was absolutely correct to rule that the public interest would not be harmed by allowing gay marriage. Indeed, the public interest would be **STRENGTHENED** by encouraging monogamous relationships among gay people, especially in the area of public health.

I suppose we can now expect the religious political groups to attempt to use the ruling in Hawaii to feed the flames of anti-gay hysteria and further its attempts to pass state anti-marriage measures. It is amazing to me that they oppose marriage and monogamy, but I know they find this "hot button" issue raises a lot of money for them and they are scared of change.

Whether gay people marry each other or not is not a matter of religion. Marriage is both a civil and religious institution. Though some religious denominations do recognize and perform same-gender marriages, support for gay marriage is NOT a fight to force any religious institution to perform them. This is about the freedom to have a civil marriage license issued by the state. Just as the state should not interfere in any way with religious ceremonies, religious groups should not dictate who gets a marriage license.

Civil marriage brings important protections to all types of families.

Bill Stosine
Internet Reader



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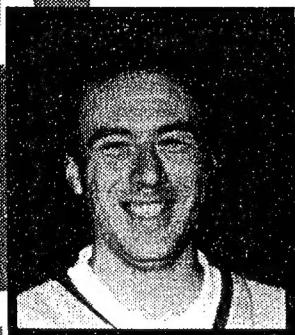
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“What’s the worst gift you’ve ever received during the holidays?”



Bart Cox
Senior environmental studies major

“A large stocking cap with a big yellow ball on top.”



Dave Goebel
Junior biology major

“A little kangaroo ornament dressed up as a basketball player.”



Jessica Latham
Fine arts major

“Dexitrim.”



Lanesha Mickles
Junior business major

“A keyboard. I don’t even know how to play it.”



Darci Griffith
Sophomore music education

“My grandma used to buy these sweaters from thrift stores. They usually had gold or silver threads woven into the pattern. Oh, and they usually had shoulder pads, too! And whenever she came to visit she would ask us to wear them!”



Marie Tram
Junior biology major

“Last year -- nothing!”



Paul Fairfax
Senior computer science major

“Clothes of some sort. I like toys for christmas.”



Jim Spargo
Sophomore undecided major

“A shirt that my brothers had, so we’d each have shirts that matched.”



Julie Roberts
Senior marketing major

“Perfume I already had, and I don’t wear.”



Marlies Munhall
Sophomore music education

“When I was 18 my sister gave me a yellow sweater with a fuzzy teddy bear on it -- it was HORRIBLE!”



Tara Aldinger
Occupational therapy major

“A ‘Garbage’ CD.”



Tiffaney Lamell
Freshman commercial arts major

“A card with no money in it.”



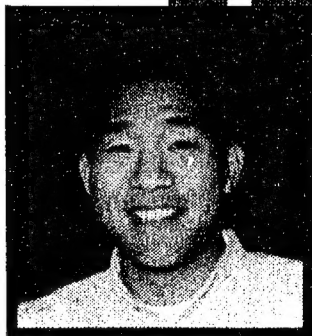
Bazvan Petrescu
M.I.S. graduate student

“A Rubik’s Cube. It made me feel stupid. My friends could do it. I couldn’t.”



Jason Boyer
Senior biology major

“A heavy metal concert t-shirt that was two sizes too small -- when I hated heavy metal.”



David Hahn
Biology/art major

“An Alvin and the Chipmunks Christmas Album. I can still sing you the songs”

--photos and question by Larry Voegela

Sinbad, Schwarzenegger 'Jingle All the Way'

REVIEW BY JOEL D. STEVENS

Christmas movies that try to satirize the materialism of the season have a real problem coming off as such when they come out at Thanksgiving (beat the holiday movie traffic), star the biggest and the highest paid of action movie stars, and base the entire narrative on getting the expensive high-tech gift.

In "Jingle All the Way," action superstar Arnold Schwarzenegger lightens up with a comedy farce of a Christmas Eve journey for his son's perfect gift.

Schwarzenegger is Howard, a workaholic, absent father, who, after missing his son's important karate exhibition, is set to get his son Jamie (Jake Lloyd) the perfect gift: the gadgety action figure Turbo Man. Determined not to let his son down, Howard tells his wife Liz (Rita Wilson) that he has already gotten the hot commodity gift (think Cabbage Patch Kids, only harder to get) all the while plotting to sneak out the next morning (Christmas Eve) to get the gift before his wife figures out he forgot to get it months ago.

As the formula would go, Turbo Man has been sold out from stores for weeks and a not a single one can be found in the Twin Cities. Howard is determined, trailing shoppers to possible stores with remaining action figures obsessively, running into and ultimately competing with deranged postal worker/father Myron (Sinbad) who is searching for his own Turbo Man.

Met with laughs and ridicule that he waited to the last minute to purchase the toy, Howard is propositioned by a sleazy Mall of America Santa (Jim Belushi) to purchase a Turbo Man at an inflated price. Seeing no other options, Howard accepts, only to discover Belushi and his Santa impersonators are con artists selling defective Turbo Men dolls

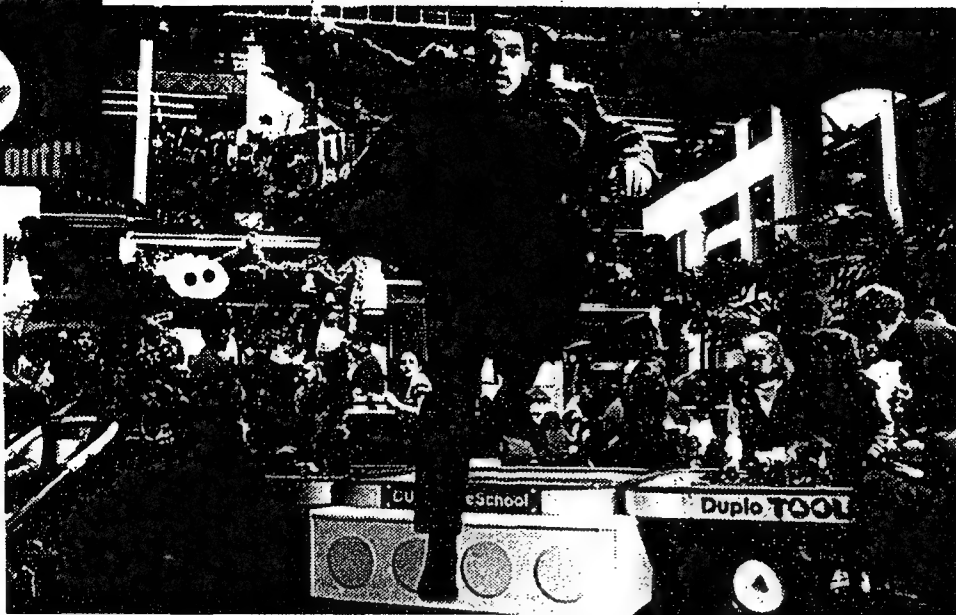
to unsuspecting parents. So, once again, Howard is back on his quest, and Turbo Man seems an impossible conclusion.

Howard struggles with the impending possibility he may fail his son's one Christmas wish and that he's not the father he thought he was, all the while his next-door neighbor (Phil Hartman) puts the moves on his wife in his absence.

Howard only wants to be a good father, and so does the barely-sane Sinbad, but the film never explores this duality (where is Sinbad's son?) as well as it could. The remainder of the plot is about as predictable as it is corny — as Howard beats up sleazy con-men Santas, cold cocks a reindeer, and battles his own failures as a father, concluding with the father and son in peril, leading up to a sentimental moral, conclusion.

"Jingle All the Way" has the look and feel of a John Hughes ("Christmas Vacation," "Home Alone") holiday comedy with only half the writing. The whole plot of the film tries to be an indictment of Christmas' materialism, and to show us the gifts we want the most are always right in front of us, but only barely exceeds as a screwball comedy of set-up, knock-down humor by Schwarzenegger and Sinbad.

Arnold has sculpted his career by taking roles that don't make him do too much and show how far he's come since



Arnold Schwarzenegger as Howard Langston races across a huge mall on Christmas Eve in a madcap search for the hottest toy of the season in "Jingle All the Way."

"Conan the Barbarian" in acting ability. He does this by alternating his roles, at one time he'll do his typical action movie role where he is almost always an American law enforcement officer with no explanation for his thick Austrian accent and the other is the heartwarming, light comedy fare he does with "Jingle All the Way" (the former with much more success than the latter). Schwarzenegger appears more stiff here doing comedy than he has in quite some time, he appears to be only marginally capable of pulling off the sophomoric one-liners the script possesses. And Sinbad is no more effective — his timing is fine, but he has nothing to work with other than falling down, smirking and doing the crazy postal worker routine, bringing the whole narrative down a notch it can't afford.

Holiday comedies are a common Hollywood commodity. They come out from Thanksgiving to Christmas day and are usually year-end throwaway features like "Jingle All the Way" with poor writing, fair jokes, and some sentimental spirit thrown in.

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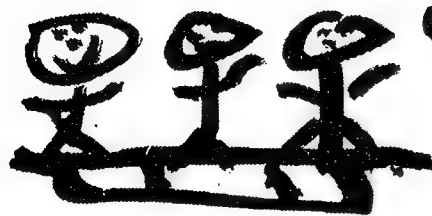
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Happy Holidays



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Tops in Holiday Movies

REVIEW BY BECKY HAMILTON

It's time once again for Christmas movies. Those classic holiday films, whether old or new, that every American family watches 57 times a year. Regardless of how many we watch, how many times we watch them, and how cheesy they are, we love them. There are some great Christmas films.

My most important criteria for a great film is that after I watch it, I remember one or two perfect little quotes. For example, "Son, you got a panty on your head." (Raising Arizona).

I'd like to share some perfect quotes from my favorite Christmas movies. See if you can guess the movie before reading past the quote.

"Every time a bell rings, an angel gets its wings." That should be easy. The all-time favorite television Christmas movie, "It's a Wonderful Life." It seems like this film is on every channel every day from Thanksgiving through Christmas. The movie first premiered in 1946 and was a flop. The movie became public domain, so PBS stations picked it up and played it against the bigger networks' new Christmas movies, and it gained popularity every year. This was Frank Capra (director) and James Stewart's favorite film. I love this movie because seeing George Bailey learn to appreciate his life and gain confidence, (and manage to hold on to Zuzu's petals through the whole ordeal) gives a person warm fuzzies.

"Oh, say can you see..." This is in a lot of movies, I guess, but it's the best part of "National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation." Clark's zillion Christmas lights he fought with for so long finally light up at the end of the movie, and Grams starts singing "The Star Spangled Banner." In the typical Griswold way, the whole family finds this a touching moment and joins in, concluding the song

with, of course, "play ball!" This film gives us a different view of Christmas - all the bad stuff. Randy Quaid is excellent as the in-law who lives in a Winnebago and crashes the holiday gathering. This John Hughes film from 1989 was rated two stars (fair) by Roger Ebert. I would give it at least three, if for no other reason than when the cat gets caught in the Christmas tree lights.

"Did you ever look around and wonder, who are these people?" This is a fairly new movie (1995) starring Ms. Diversity, Holly Hunter, and directed by Jodie Foster. I enjoy "Home For The Holidays" because it is honest. It depicts '90s style holidays. I bet everyone in America can relate with Holly Hunter's family in this movie in some way. Divorced Hunter is so stressed out that when her 60-year-old boss fires her, she kisses him. OK, maybe you can't relate to that. But her 16-year-old daughter drives her to the airport and announces that not only is she spending Thanksgiving with her boyfriend's family, she plans on having sex for the first time. Hunter's mother wears a wig, (she had a great quote - "I can see your roots, dear"). We then find out that Hunter is a vegetarian and needs a special menu for the holiday dinner, her brother, Robert Downey, Jr., is gay, her yuppie sister is a stressed-out jerk, and their crazy old aunt never married because she is in love with another important character in the film. This movie is good to see to realize that maybe your family isn't as crazy as they could be.

"Roast beast is a feast I can't stand in the least." "How The Grinch Stole Christmas" is easy to watch several times per season. Chuck

-- see Movies, page 14--



The Christmas classic "The Nutcracker" is just one of the many performances during the holiday season.

Holiday Shows are Something to Celebrate

PREVIEW BY BEN THOMPSON

So you want a Christmas concert and Manheim Steamroller's not quite what you had in mind. Here are some shows which might fit the bill.

Saturday night, Vernon Yard recording artists Low will be in town at the Cog Factory. Low recently released its third album "The Curtain Hits the Cast." "The Curtain" lives through dreamy guitars and spacey rhythm, all easy enough to relax to. The Duluth band proves to be a soothing, appetizing source of music, that fringes between Sonic Youth, Afghan Whigs, and a touch of Tori Amos.

Looking for something a little more high speed, then get thee to the Ranch Bowl on Dec. 17. Sponge is set to hit Omaha. Before you clean your calendars, it has been rumored the show is canceled, but as of press time, I was

unable to get a confirmation. Sponge is touring in support of its second album, "Waxecstatic," and should put most alterna-rock heads back into their place.

Opening for Sponge will be Red 5 and Ruth Ruth. Ruth Ruth takes an Everclear meets Catherine Wheel approach, and adds some punk effort, to make some radio friendly tunes with an edge. The band recently released a six song EP, "The Little Death," which only amounts to 18 minutes of music, but it's an appealing 18 minutes. If this show is still scheduled, it should be a powerful night of music.

Although this next show is after Christmas, it could prove to be the best of the set. Relativity Records recording artist and Lincoln's own

--see Shows, page 14--

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A Plethora of Holiday Spirit

One thing I have never liked about the holidays is the music. It's ridiculous. Everybody puts up a big spiel about Christmas music that we'll start listening to just after Thanksgiving and give up on before we even reach Dec. 25. Then there's the money we pay to hear it, \$10-\$16 for a CD we'll listen to for less than a month a year, if that. Even so, I am a victim, yet again, to the Holiday music crunch.

Punk Around the Tree

Last year marked the release of my choice for the best Christmas music. Rhino Records released a compilation full of punk rockers doing their own versions of holiday songs. All the best punkers (and for you kiddies, that doesn't include Green Day or the Offspring) are included, and then some.

The Ravers lead off the disc with "(It's Gonna be a) Punk Rock Christmas." It's punk with an attitude and it's well done. The Dickies and Sloppy Seconds power through a couple minutes of tunes, then Fear hits with "F—K Christmas." Fear starts slow, before slamming into a vile holiday chorus that together lasts about a minute.

The Greedies and the Damned precede Pansy Division's "Homo Christmas," one of the best songs on the album. Bouquet of Veal and the Celibate Rifles lead into "Merry Christmas (I Don't Wanna Fight Tonight)" by the legendary, now extinct, Ramones.

Metal Mike, Alison & Julia, El Vez, and the Humpers fly us into the second half of the album, when TVTV\$ loads up on egg nog in "Daddy Drank Our Christmas Money."

Mojo Nixon, D.I. and Stiff Little Fingers conclude the album.

If you're looking for some humorous Christmas music that still hits the holiday spirit, "Punk Rock Christmas" is a good selection — if you can handle the 47 minutes of punked-out bands hoping for some holiday change in their stockings.

It's A Geffen Silent Night

Geffen released its take on alternative Christmas with "Just Say Noel." Leading off is Beck with a funky, dopey track titled "The Little Drum Machine Boy." It screams into your ears, as you try to imagine what is going on in this guy's head.

Aimee Mann and Michael Penn bring back the family spirit with "Christmastime." "Santa Doesn't Cop Out on Dope" is done in a typical, distorted, off-tuned style by Sonic Youth.

It's by far the best track on the album, written by Martin Mull.

Seattle's Posies play the softer, easy swaying "Christmas" by Florence Dore. In this track, Velocity Girl's now former lead vocalist joins up with the Posies on vocals. The Roots put on a phat effort with "Millie Pulled a Pistol on Santa." It's not quite rap, and not quite spoken word, but it's pretty cool.

The Wild Colonials play a wicked pied piper beginning in "Christmas is Quiet." Also appearing are Southern Culture on the Skids, Remy Zero, Elastica, XTC, The Musical Cast of Toys, and Ted Hawkins. It's a good album, but the grasp isn't as firm as most Christmas albums.

A Rock For Choice Christmas

Columbia Records sparkles with "O Come All Ye Faithful." For the first time since I was about 8 years old, a Christmas story scared me. Henry Rollins' "Twas the Night Before Christmas" enlists gunfire and phony sirens to aid in his version of the most famous Christmas tale. This track would have forced me to give up turkey forever if I'd heard it before I turned 10.

Dance Hall Crashers spank the Christmas tradition with "I Did it for the Toys," where Mrs. Claus leaves Santa and looks for company with children. Sponge rattles on with "Christmas Day," and Juliana Hatfield contributes

"Make It Home," inspired by her appearance on the short-lived comedy "My So-Called Life."

Bush barely breathes with "Good King Somethingorother," and Luscious Jackson dazzles in "Queen of Bliss," probably the only song on the album that's danceable. It brings out the best of both worlds, as Luscious weaves a beautiful chorus and even stronger verses to wind you up into a ball lying in the corner.

Mike Watt and the Crew of the Flying Saucer start "The Little Drummer Boys" off with what else but a drum solo. The two drummers of the Flying Saucer, along with Watt's luminescent bass will have you smiling and bobbing your head before it's over.

"O Come All Ye Faithful" also includes Shudder to Think, Wool, The Presidents of the United States of America, Cranes, face to face, and Deep Forest.

It's not just an alternative Christmas, it's a wonderful season. These albums bring together several of the best of today's alternative artists, if for no other reason but to say the same thing I'll say:

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--from Shows, page 13--

Mercy Rule will return to Omaha on Dec. 26 at the Cog Factory. I haven't heard anything about a new album, but it's pretty unlikely the band is still touring in support of 1994's "Providence." There should be a considerable amount of new music coming from Mercy Rule, but even if there isn't, the band always manages to put on a great show in the local area.

If these shows don't quite trip your trigger, you might be out of luck, unless you want to consider the Jan 15 Smashing Pumpkins show a holiday concert. Of course this one doesn't have to have anything to do with holidays to become one. Tickets went on sale Saturday and if they are still around, it'd be wise to grab one now. Fountains of Wayne is scheduled to open.

We've now hit the dead of winter, and the limited amount of concerts is expected, but so far it looks good. Four good concerts, two before Christmas and two after, will give you something to celebrate.

Ruth Ruth (right) will open with Red 5 for Sponge on Dec. 17 at the Ranch bowl.

--from Movies, page 13--

Jones's animation, Boris Karloff's narration, and Dr. Seuss' story mesh beautifully, making it enjoyable for children and adults. The message is simple in this film: "Christmas cannot be bought at a store. It's a feeling." I love this movie from the first grinning expression on the Grinch's face to the last coo of Cindy Lou Who, who was just two.

"I can't put my arms down!" My very favorite Christmas movie, "A Christmas Story," has hundreds of good quotes. Dad's innovative, indistinguishable cursing, Mom's oinking at the dinner table, the little brother's "I can't get up!" and "that's mine!" and Ralphie's double dog daring and "oohhhhhh fffuuudddggge!" make this movie a masterpiece. 1983's "A Christmas Story" is based on the novel, "In God We Trust, All Others Pay Cash" by Jean Shepherd, a radio humorist, who also narrates it. The



story is about Ralphie, a kid who wants nothing more in the world than a "Red Ryder BB gun with a compass on the stock and this thing which tells time." He writes an essay about it for school, imagining his teacher in awe of his great piece of literature. He even has fantasies about "bad guys" invading the house, and he defends the family with the BB gun. Everyone is against Ralphie, saying "You'll shoot your eye out!" If you haven't already seen it (where have you been?) check this movie out to see if he gets his beloved BB gun.

Other Christmas movies I highly recommend: "Santa Claus: The Movie," "The Santa Clause," "Nightmare Before Christmas," "A Charlie Brown Christmas," "Home Alone," "Scrooged," "A Christmas Carol" (all versions!), "Miracle on 34th Street," and "Mixed Nuts."

Holiday Greetings and Gay Happy Meetings

REVIEW BY AARON ZAVITZ

"Reform School Timmy" opened with Christmas cheer and a sold-out crowd on Friday. However, this play is not in the same vein as classic stories such as "The Gift of the Magi," "It's a Wonderful Life," or even "Miracle on 34th Street." No, "Reform School Timmy" is in a class of its own. It's probably the first and only gay spin-off of the classic story, "A Christmas Carol."

Christmas is my favorite holiday, next to Arbor day. It's that time of year that whenever I see Christmas lights I get really mushy and start to speak like a baby. It's also that time when I whip out the Elvis Presley Christmas album and go carolling — in the privacy of my own car. Christmas is the time when I know I won't be scrutinized by listening to Johnny Mathis or Andy Williams.

Anyway, I learned that Christmas is more than a time of giving or celebrating the birth of the Savior, it's about making money. Movies and theaters market themselves around the holidays well.

"It's A Wonderful Life" is showing at the Omaha Theatre Company for Young People. I'm anxious to see why it was such a blockbuster last year and if the lead will do a Jimmy Stewart impression.

The Shelterbelt Theatre will do its follow up to their last year's "Stocking Stuffers." Last year was like watching the "Saturday Night Live" Christmas show. It was clever and amusing and I'm anxious to see what they have this year.

The Omaha Community Playhouse will do its annual "A Christmas Carol." I have never seen it because it's always sold out. Maybe next year.

However, despite my absence from the Playhouse, I saw another version of the timeless classic about Scrooge. "Reform School Timmy." I don't think it's anything Charles Dickens had in mind and thank God he's not alive to see what has happened to his classic story — not to say that this show is bad in any way...well...it is bad, but not in the sense of the true meaning. Let me explain.

"Reform School Timmy" (amusingly directed by Zack Humbee) is a play for and about homosexuals or soon-to-be

homosexuals. It's about the story of Screwge, who owns a telemarketing company in Omaha. He fires his employee Mrs. Crotchitch and, as the Dickens story goes, he's visited by three ghosts, sent by his dead partner Marley — who, in this

There is no political message (except a reference to Jon Christensen) and no overwhelming social comment, it's just a troupe of very entertaining and obviously talented actors giving the gay population of Omaha (Omasexuals) some holiday cheer.

version, got run over by a milk truck. But instead of trying to make Screwge like Christmas, the three ghosts are to make Screwge come out of the closet and proclaim that he is gay.

There is no political message (except a reference to Jon Christensen) and no overwhelming social comment, it's just a troupe of very entertaining and obviously talented actors giving the gay population of Omaha (Omasexuals) some holiday cheer.

It's "Kids in the Hall" meets "Jeffery." Through raunchy satire and burlesque stereotype, they shoot out gay jokes faster than an uzi on automatic fire (I'm a critic after all).

Hughston Walkinshaw as Screwge (who is almost 29 years old) is a cross between a Jew floorwalker and Katherine Hepburn. Hughston, who was the lead in "Omaha the Movie," proves that he can work a crowd and emit great comic timing (even when he forgets his lines).

Jill Anderson, who also starred in "Omaha The Movie" (which they do a shameless plug for saying that it's out on video) was the most entertaining of the evening. Through her wild and exaggerated characterizations of two of her characters, Mrs. Crotchitch and the Ghost of Christmas Presents, she proves to be a remarkable talent and comic goddess.

The rest of the cast is certainly dedicated and produces enough energy to make the show worthwhile.

"Reform School Timmy's" jokes would not make any sense outside the Omaha limits, it's very cleverly written for homosexuals in the city limits. For example, numerous references to a person named D— Boy was used. It had to be explained to me later and learned that he was a guy who danced in his underwear at the Max (a gay dance club). When his name was mentioned, the crowd went wild with applause, and I leaned over to my friend and asked, "Who's this Dick Boyd character?"

What's interesting to see is stereotypical gay humor being laughed at by a predominately gay audience. In another setting, it might be offensive and I'm sure this play will offend those who come and have no idea what to expect — it's no "Frosty the Snowman." The script and the actors knew what would trip the audience's trigger and they pulled it off (maybe that's not the best way to say that).

"Reform School Timmy" is targeted for a certain audience, but it's not to say that straight people will not have fun. The amusing, raunchy, nasty play with a little frontal nudity, runs December 6-22 at the Blue Barn Theatre.

It's an interesting night of theater, but I'm still going to keep my presents in the closet. "God bless us, everyone!" For more information and reservations call 345-1576. Have a Merry Christmas!

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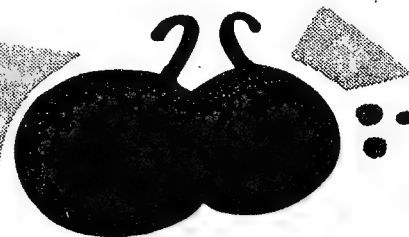
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Streisand's Latest Movie Has Two Faces

REVIEW BY JOEL STEVENS

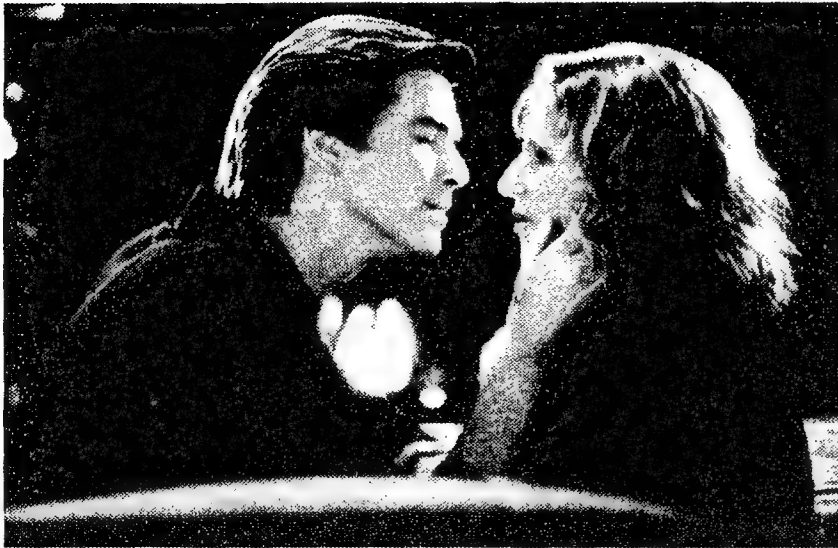
"The Mirror Has Two Faces" is a throwback to another romantic era of film. With elements of both 1940s screwball farce and the romantic comedies of Preston Sturges, director/star Barbara Streisand creates an age-old "ugly duckling" tale of two unlucky-in-love New York City professors.

Streisand is Rose, a witty, romantic literature professor living with her overbearing and still beautiful mother (Lauren Bacall). Filled with self-doubt and low self-esteem Rose struggles daily with her failure to find love, while her beautiful, shallow sister (Mimi Rogers) marries the man (Pierce Brosnan) she introduced to her sister.

Jeff Bridges is Greg, a distracted, stuffy Calculus professor at the same university, who hatches a platonic equation for the perfect relationship: marry a woman who is your intellectual equal, someone you can talk to and most importantly someone who you are not attracted to. Enter Rose. Their relationship begins well enough, Greg sees promise in Rose (he has no sexual attraction to her), she thinks she's found the perfect man for her, and everything fits like one of Greg's prime numbers.

So, Rose and Greg decide their relationship works so well they should get married and they do. But Rose begins to want more than platonic companionship from Greg and decides to pursue the ultimate cog to Greg's equation: sex. Greg refuses, not wanting to risk the delicate balance they have achieved in their relationship other couples take years to secure. Rose sees this as the ultimate smack to her self-esteem, that Greg won't ever love her for the same reason she doesn't love herself: she isn't beautiful.

Rose leaves, heartbroken, and Greg can't understand why, followed by the usual unreturned phone calls to Rose and



Rose (Barbra Streisand) is surprised to find that she's not interested in Alex's (Pierce Brosnan) sudden advances in "The Mirror Has Two Faces."

apologies. Then she decides to get in shape in mind and body montage where Rose discovers her beauty was there all along, hidden under her excessive weight, frumpy hair and low self-esteem.

Streisand is one of those stars whose total control over her projects often mires them in egocentrism and makes the film more about *her* than the story and characters. Which is not to say "The Mirror Has Two Faces" is not a good film, because it is. Richard LaGravenese's script is filled with pithy one-liners and a lot of dialogue/character humor. The "ugly duckling" narrative is constructed around beauty's miscon-

ceptions, and it works, as long as you don't ask too many questions about what the film is really trying to say about beauty: Beauty is skin deep? Inner beauty *is* outer beauty?

Streisand's direction is a lot like her acting: resonant but a touch over the top (perhaps without her soft focus embellishment). A fine actress her only flaw seems to be her inability to show who she is beyond that one-liner "Jewish girl with a heart of gold overcomes all" cliché she established 28 years ago in "Funny Girl." She clamors too much, for my taste, for anyone, everyone, to love her.

If you like '40s romantic comedies where the conclusion is always predictable and Doris Day and Cary Grant always live happily ever after, then "The Mirror Has Two Faces" is clearly for you. But if you prefer realistic relationship fare a little deeper than the stock dancing in the street denouement (of course to a Streisand ballad), then maybe it's not.


With a renewed sense of herself, Streisand (in photo below) begins a transformation that involves every aspect of her physical appearance.



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SPORTS

UNO defeats New Haven, Northern Michigan Lady Mavs Advance to National Championship

By JONATHAN PELPHREY

WARRENSBURG, Mo. — The match the Lady Mavs have been working toward the entire year is finally here. By defeating New Haven on Saturday and then winning a close match with Northern Michigan on Sunday, UNO's volleyball team has advanced to Monday's national championship match against the University of Tampa.

"It was a goal of ours at the beginning of the season to be at the National Championships and to play Dec. 9," UNO Head Coach Rose Shires said Sunday. "It's something that the girls have worked for for the entire year." The Lady Mavs, in post-season play for the first time since 1993, have reached the championship match by beating two opponents at the Elite Eight in Warrensburg, Mo. Both opponents had experience in post-season play last year, and both came in to their matches ranked in

the top 10 nationally.

Shires said the pressure of the situation got to the Lady Mavs early in their first game against New Haven. "It's amazing, if you've never played here before, how much pressure there is when you start the match," she said. "Even though we have a tough region and a tough conference, we haven't experienced anything like this before. And New Haven is a quality team."

Lady Mavs Wear Down the Chargers

New Haven, coming into the match with a record of 44-1, captured the momentum early by taking advantage of UNO's nerves and 4 early service errors to jump out to a 5-0 lead before Shires called a time out.

After the time out, there was a collective effort by the whole team to get back in the match, Shires said. The Lady Mavs got on board with a block from freshman Chris Brink to reach 6-1.

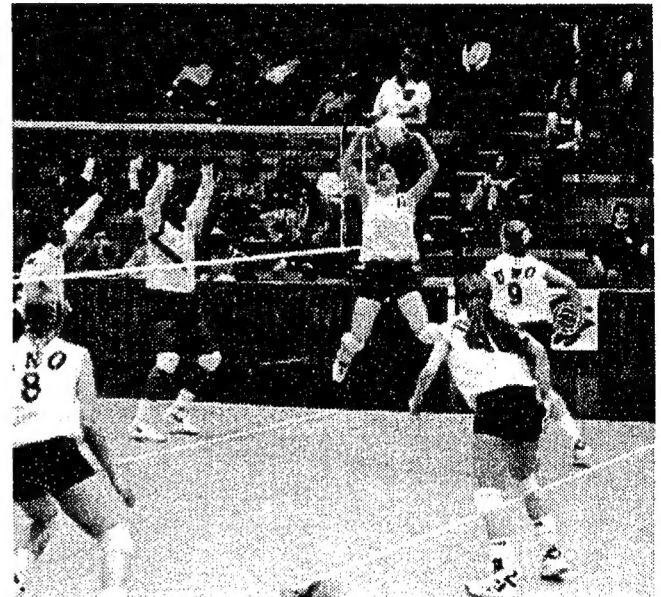
"After we scored the first time, we really relaxed," UNO senior Amy Steffel said.

Shires said the slow start didn't surprise her. "I don't get upset or excited anymore when we're down 5-0," she said. "They usually start out that way."

Behind strong play from outside hitter Christyn Malone and middle blocker Kim Gerdes, the Lady Mavs began to take over, scoring 9 consecutive points, and outscoring the Chargers 14-1 the rest of the way to win the game 15-7.

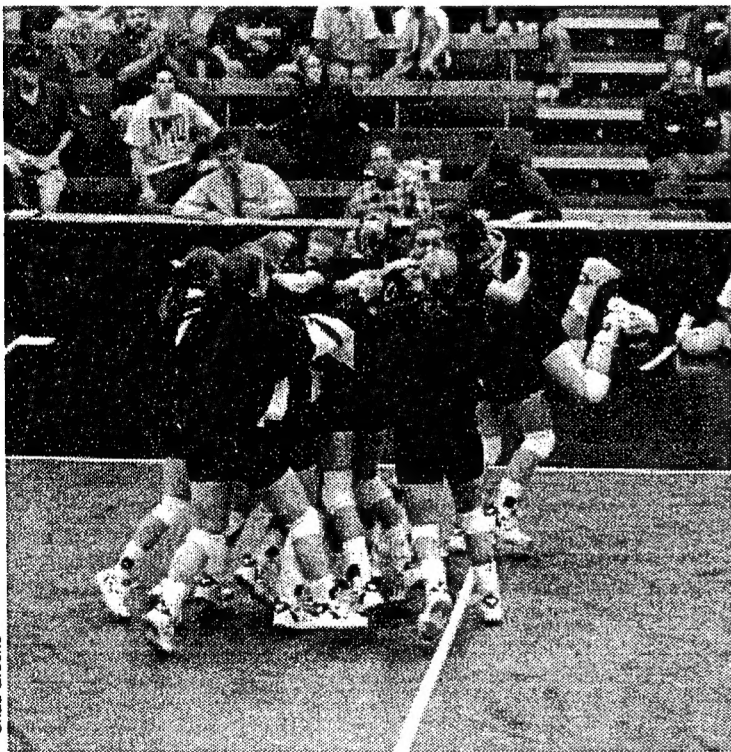
"Once we started serving the ball a little bit more aggressively and kept it in, we could get them out of their rhythm," Shires said. "And when we started to block, that was a big key for us."

The block was very important in limiting New Haven's best player, Jane Grant, to a



—Chad Greene

Tanya Cate (#11) is one of the Lady Mavs' top setters.



—Chad Greene

The Lady Mavs had plenty to celebrate with their two wins.

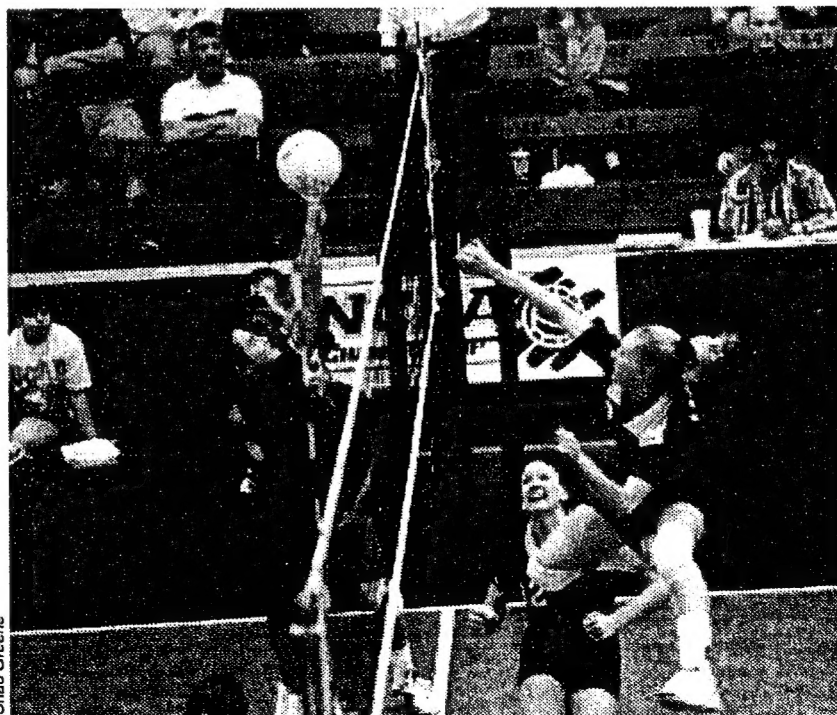
Lady Mavs Earn All-American Recognition

For the first time since 1988, a UNO volleyball player has been selected as a First Team All-American. The Division II All-America Teams were announced by the American Volleyball Coaches Association on Friday, and UNO setter Amy Steffel has been named to the first team. Middle blocker Tanya Cate was named to the second team.

Steffel, a senior, is UNO's all-time assist leader with 5,337 career assists. Only twelve other players in Division II history have topped the 5,000 mark.

Cate, recorded 424 kills and hit .354 this season, to help the Lady Mavs to their 32-2 record.

Both Cate and Steffel are past Gateway Lady Mavs of the Month.



—Chad Greene

Tenacity at the net was essential during both wins for the Lady Mavs this weekend.

.000 hitting percentage on 21 attempts.

The Lady Mavs began game two in much the same way they ended game one. But after jumping to a 7-2 lead, the Lady Mavs allowed New Haven to battle back to within one point at 13-9. After trading points back and forth to 12-11, UNO pulled away to win 15-11 on the strength of kills from Malone and Gerdes, combined with hitting errors by New Haven.

"We lost our intensity in game two and let them back in," Shires said. "That's why it was important that we come out strong in the third game."

The Lady Mavs came out very powerful indeed, scoring 14 points before allowing New Haven a single point. In game three, the Lady Mavs had three service aces and hit .476 as a team to beat New Haven 15-1. In this third game, UNO's block became a force as the Lady Mavs limited New Haven to a .050 hitting percentage.

After the match, Shires said she was surprised UNO was able to dominate in game three. "I was very surprised. I don't care what region you're from — if you're 44-1, you're good."

UNO was led Saturday by Malone, who had 12 kills on 22 attempts to hit .455 with 3 service aces. She was joined by Kim Gerdes with 9 kills and a .444 hitting percentage, and Erin Shafer who hit .304 and made 11 kills.

New Haven succeeded in shutting down second team All-American Tanya Cate in the middle, but Shires said she was pleased with the Lady Mavs' ability to pick up the slack when one player was shut down.

Shafer said the team always believed they would win the match and were determined to do so. "We knew we weren't playing that well when we were down," she said, "but that doesn't mean we didn't believe we could win."

UNO Wins Nail-Biter to Advance to Final

The Lady Mavs had to muster

--see Vball, page 19--

Coach: 'Let's get out of here'

Mavs Maul Saints 112-57

By Rod Moorhead

On Saturday night, the UNO Mavericks Basketball team defeated the Presentation College Saints, 112-57, in the UNO Fieldhouse before a crowd of 475.

Early in the first half, the game was tied only once and the lead changed hands only one time. After that, it was a whole new ball game.

By the end of the first period, UNO led, 52-27. The Mavs' first half field goal shooting was near 64 percent, and the Saints were shooting a cool 33 percent. Al Clark led the Mavs in the first half with 14 points. The Mavs controlled the boards with 16 rebounds led by Thompson, Jones, and McLarty with 3 each. The Mavs went to the free throw line six times with a 50 percent shooting average.

The Saints were led in the first half by Benny Taylor with 13 points and shot 9 for 9 from the free throw line.

In the second half, the Mavs' hot hand continued with 66 percent field goal shooting for 54 points and two 3-pointers for 6 points. The Mavs garnered 4 points from the free throw line

with a 57 percent shooting average. The Mavs continued their dominance of the boards in the second half with 18.

The ball-hawking Mavs had 34 points from steals during the game, controlling the tempo of the game from start to finish.

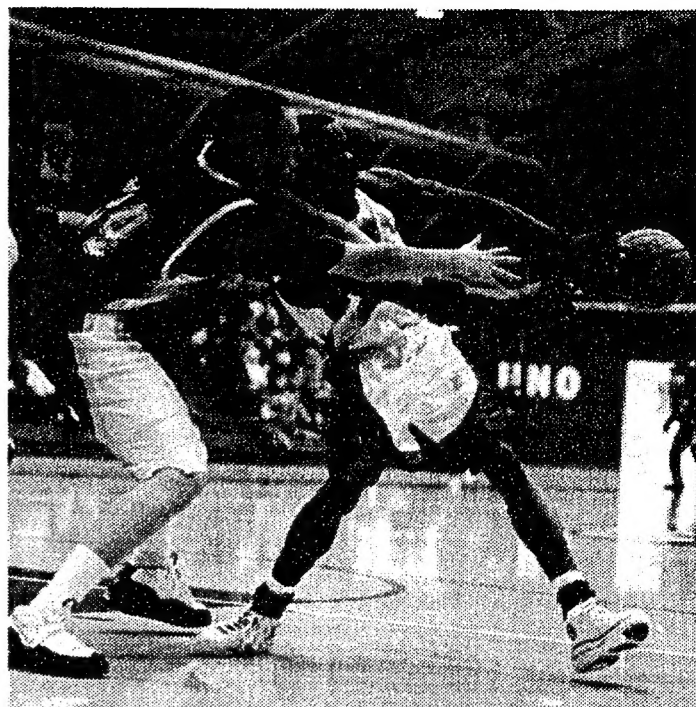
With 4 minutes left to play, Saint Head Coach Mick Spaulding called on his players to "pass the ball around, run the clock down and let's get out of here."

The Mavs did not let him, pressing the game to the finish and the highest point total scored since defeating St. Mary College of Kansas last December (114-73).

Coming into the game with a 7-6 record, Spaulding said in a post game interview that four starters were not at the game due to the flu and disciplinary reasons. Leading scorer Paul Rozell, who averages 18 points a game, was one of the absent players.

"It was unfortunate that we could not have met each other at full strength. It would have been a different ball game," Spaulding said.

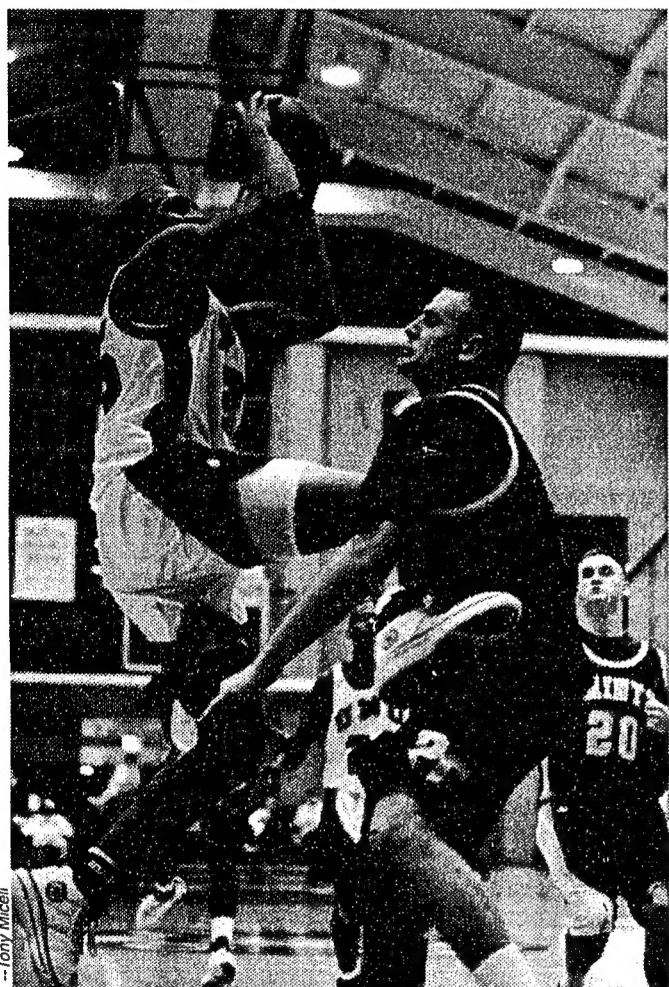
In their 112-57 win, the Mavs demolished the Saints in the fourth highest scoring game in school history. Hot-handed Mavericks scoring in double digits included Mike Simons and Al Clark with 18, Charles Thompson with 16, Jason Smith with 15,



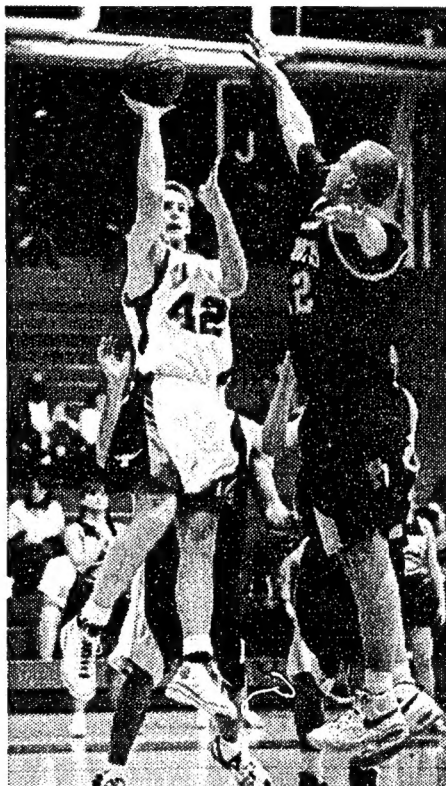
Robert Green (at right in above photo) makes a quick pass Saturday night against Presentation College.

and Charles Box with 11.

UNO Head Coach Kevin Lehman said "I am real happy with the team effort." When asked what was the deciding factor in the game, Lehman said it was the bench play and defensive pressure.



Al Clark (#24, shooting, in above photo) takes it to the hole. Tim Burrell (#42 in photo at right) takes the shot.



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--from vball, page 17--

up all the determination they could to win Sunday in their semi-final match against third-ranked Northern Michigan (NMU). The Wildcats took the Lady Mavs to a fifth and final game after splitting the first four.

In game one, it was immediately obvious that the wildcats were going to challenge the Lady Mavs. Liu Jun, NMU's All-American setter and two-time Division II player of the year, presented UNO with a tough challenge defensively.

"I think early on, our blockers were more concerned about Jun as an attacker, and less concerned about their own hitters," Shires said.

UNO was concerned about Jun for good reason. The previous night she was responsible for 14 kills against a very good Nebraska-Kearney team. Setters do not usually make that many kills, but Jun is unique in her ability to be a threat offensively.

"Not many teams in the country have a setter like Liu Jun," Shires said. "She, unfortunately, kept our focus too long in the match."

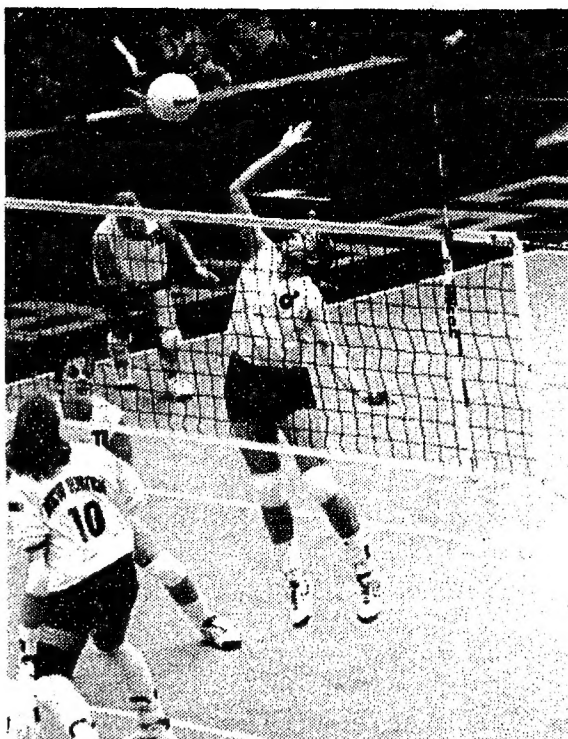
Because Jun presented such a threat, the Lady Mavs overcompensated for her at times, allowing Wildcat hitters Erin Hamilton, Kris Backstrom, and April Evans all to hit above .300 for the match. Joy Hanzal and Kathy Jewel also had a good match with 16 and 12 kills, respectively.

"I do think their middle beat us," Shires said after the match. "They're much taller than we are and were able, in the middle, to use our blocks. They were not hitting angles like most middles do. They were hitting right over the top of our block."

Shires said the Lady Mavs ended up giving NMU the angles in order to cover up the middle more effectively. Fortunately for UNO, the Wildcats didn't use them, Shires said:

"It wasn't until late in the match that our block kicked in and we developed some timing, especially on the quick sets," Shires said. "Once we developed our timing on the block, we felt we had better control of the match."

UNO began the first game of the match by going ahead 2-0,



The Lady Mavs were a force to be reckoned with at the net.

but NMU was able to capture the lead at 3-5 and 4-7 before UNO came back to lead at 11-10. After a NMU time out, UNO was able to capture the momentum and win 4 of the next 5 points, and take the game at 15-11. Things were looking good and the Lady Mavs hit .326 compared to .271 for NMU.

In game two, however, the Wildcats pounced all over the Lady Mavs early, seizing an 8-0 lead, and winning the game 15-7. UNO was held to a .205 hitting percentage, while the Wildcats were able to capitalize on their quick set to make 21 kills and hit .298.

UNO was able to bounce back in game three, though, behind a kill and an ace from Shafer. Their early 3-0 lead didn't last, however. NMU rallied to take a 6-3 lead and the Lady Mavs had to play catch-up until they captured the lead at 12-10, following a kill and an ace from Cate. UNO won the third game 15-13 on a kill by Shafer. Neither team was able to produce much offense in this game, relying instead on tough defense, and great blocking. NMU hit .127 and UNO hit .191 for the game.

Game four started off well for the Lady Mavs, but their 4-1 lead disintegrated as they made some errors. NMU then utilized their quick set and jumped out to a 4-9 lead before Shires called time out.

5-0 Lady Mavs Perfect in Phoenix

BY MELISSA BUCK AND
MARYLYNNE ZIEMBA

When the Lady Mavs returned from a pair of weekend games in Phoenix, they came back with a little more than some sun and warm weather. Coming off their recent win in the O2TV Tournament, they were able to add another two wins to their 5-0 record.

Thursday, the Lady Mavs beat Grand Canyon University 68-57, overcoming a 31-27 deficit at halftime to take home the win.

"We were down at halftime," said senior forward Stacie Kaiser, "but we led a sweeping charge in the second half."

Kaiser was the leading scorer for the Lady Mavs Friday night with 16 points and was also the leading rebounder with 11.

However, in their second game of the weekend Friday against San Francisco State, it was a different kind of game against a different kind of team.

"They were different than Grand Canyon because the whole game was a strong 40-minute interval," Kaiser said. "The team played at its best."

Head Coach Cherri Mankenberg said she was "really pleased with the team's performance. We have great depth on the bench."

The Lady Mavs will play Midland Lutheran College tomorrow night at 7 p.m. in the Fieldhouse.

UNO scored 2 more points, but NMU proved to strong as they finished the game with 6 straight points to win 15-6. NMU limited UNO to .081 hitting in the fourth game, while hitting .270 themselves. UNO only had 10 kills.

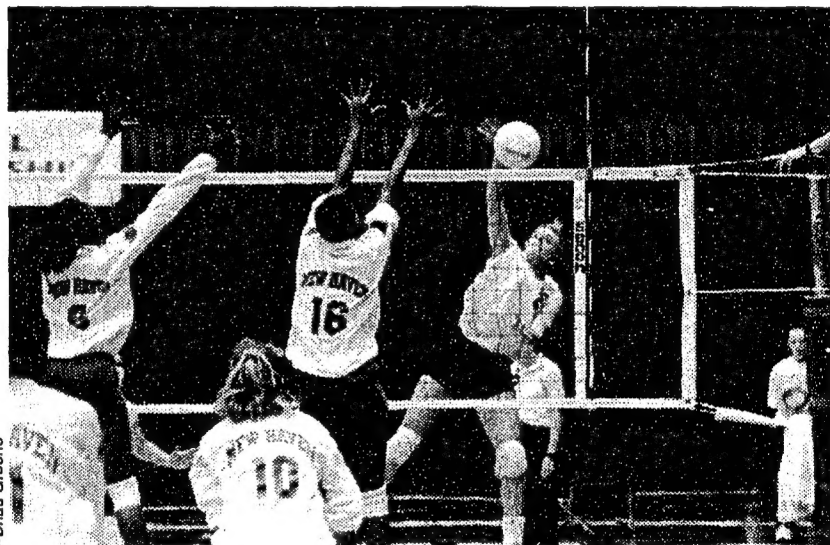
The fifth and deciding game was with rally scoring, with a point won on every serve. UNO never trailed and won the game 15-10, behind strong play from Cate in the middle, and a strong finish from Shafer. "I think in the fifth game, we didn't play our system very well," NMU's Jun said after the match. "But I'm very proud of my team."

"That was a fantastic match," Shires said. "It was great."

Steffel, UNO's setter, matched up well against Jun. Steffel finished with 57 assists to Jun's 67. She had 8 kills and hit .273, to Jun's 7 kills and .294 hitting percentage. "I'm a little tired," Steffel said. "This game had super-fast offense, a lot of transitions, a lot of rallies, so I'm a little tired right now. But I don't think we'll have any problem getting the adrenaline going again tomorrow."

"These girls are definitely in excellent physical shape," Shires said. Shafer said that although the team was thrilled to advance to the final, the celebration was dampened with the realization that the teams goal is still one match away.

"At first there was some celebration," she said, "but we got into our huddle and said 'All right, we're not done. We've got one more to go.'"



Erin Shafer dominates at the net during Saturday's match against New Haven.

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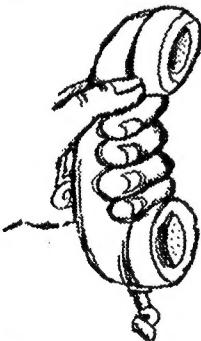
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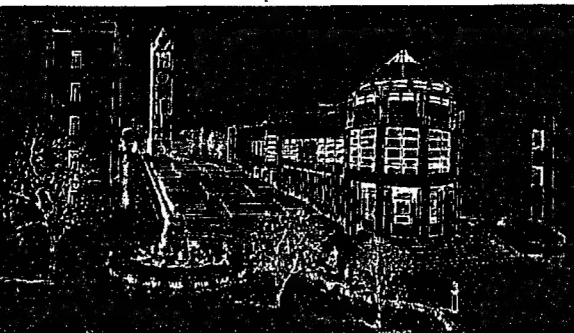
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Tuesday, Dec. 10th

7 am Catholic Campus Ministries
8 am Insurance Exams
9 am Career Center
10 am Registrar
11 am American Multicultural Students
11:30 am Afghanistan Studies
12 noon Master Success
3 pm A.A.U.P.
5 pm Alpha Xi Delta
5:30 pm Gerontology Association
6 pm Criminal Justice
6:30 pm Asian American Students
7 pm President Regents Council
7:30 pm Native American Studies

Wednesday, Dec. 11th

7:30 am CMA Exams
8 am Insurance Exams
9 am Goodrich Program
11 am American Multicultural Students
12 noon Chapter Summary Bible Study
12 noon Association Latino Students
12 noon Traffic Appeals
12 noon Music Department
12 noon African American Organization
12 noon Career Center
12 noon Alcoholics Anonymous
2 pm Faculty Senate
3 pm Fellowship of Christian Athletes
4 pm SPO Board
5 pm Gay & Lesbian Students
5 pm Delta Sigma Theta

5:30 pm Construction Industry

Thursday, Dec. 12th

7:30 am CMA Exams
8 am Facilities
9 am Athletics
9:30 am Superintendents & Principals
11:30 am English Department
12 noon Catholic Campus Ministry
1:30 pm Junior Panhellenic
3 pm Panhellenic
5 pm Delta Sigma Pi
6 pm Delta Sigma Theta Board
6:30 pm Asian American Students
7 pm Delta Sigma Pi

Friday, Dec. 13th

7:30 am University Relations
9 am Goodrich Program

10 am Safety Committee

12 noon Interfraternity Council
12 noon Chapter Summary Bible Study
12 noon International Programs
12 noon Intensive Language
2 pm Sponsored Projects
2 pm Graduate Studies
3 pm Music Department
4 pm Delta Sigma Theta
5 pm Beta Alpha Psi
7 pm Chancellor's Gala
8 pm Chancellor's Reception

Saturday, Dec. 14th

1 pm Chancellor's Event
2 pm Chancellor's Christmas Party
3 pm Delta Sigma Theta

Sunday, Dec. 15th

10 am Holiday Fair
4 pm Theta Chi
4 pm SPO Travel
5:30 pm Theta Chi
6 pm UNO Band
6 pm Lambda Chi Alpha

Monday, Dec. 16th

12 noon Goodrich Program

* Check events boards at north and south entrances of MBSC for meeting locations *



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